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ABSTRACT

Noting that Canadians have witnessed profound demographic, economic, social, cultural, and technological changes over the last century and the need for sound demographic information for future planning, this report is the second to identify significant trends affecting Canada's families. Following an introductory section providing relevant definitions and a historical perspective regarding changes in families, the report is organized in three parts: (1) "Canada's Families: Who They Are," including information on age structure, immigrants, population distribution, family types, marriage, divorce, parenthood, adoption, child custody, and single parents; (2) "Canada's Families: What They Do," including information on family time use, labor force participation, employed parents, unemployment, income level, and family poverty; and (3) "Canada's Families: How They Feel," including information on time stress, family expenditures, child care, extracurricular activities, family communication, health, unpaid assistance to family members, children in out-of-home care, family violence, and desired number of children. Each part of the report includes numerous charts and tables of family-related information accompanied by discussion of the trends presented. Both national and provincial level data are included. The report concludes by noting that the tapestry of Canadian families will continue to grow richer and more varied and asserting that the nation must decide how best to acknowledge, support, and reinforce the commitments that individuals make to one another as they create and sustain their families. (KB)

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PROFILING CANADA'S FAMILIES II

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...the essence of family is:
who it is,
how it feels, and
what it does.

Letty Cottin Pogrebin, *Family Politics: Love and Power on an intimate Frontier*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1983, 26

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Foreword

In recognition of the International Year of the Family in 1994, The Vanier Institute of the Family published the first edition of *Profiling Canada's Families*. It helped Canadians understand their families and the trends that affect their daily lives. The first edition was received well and was used extensively by teachers and students, researchers, public servants, business people, professionals working directly with families, politicians, members of faith communities, the media and, last but not least, Canadian families themselves. We are now pleased to introduce to you *Profiling Canada's Families II*.

In 1996, Statistics Canada conducted the last census of the millennium. Other surveys followed which added important insights and revealed both patterns of continuity and change in the lives of Canadians and their families. *Profiling Canada's Families II* relies on the authoritative data collected by Statistics Canada, a national institution which is respected worldwide as well as by Canadians.

The Vanier Institute of the Family thanks all the people who gathered, studied and provided the information that appears in this book.

The Canadian Council on Social Development and its Centre for International Statistics uncovered and deciphered the data that would answer the questions most frequently asked about patterns of family formation and family functioning.

Clarence Lochhead of DataQuest Consulting analyzed and digested not only the data, but more significantly, assisted the Institute in developing a framework within which the facts and figures can help us make sense of the lives we live in the context of our families. He has contributed in a profound way—through this and other Institute projects—to our understanding of family life in Canada.

After all the numbers have been collected, consolidated, digested and analyzed, the Institute turned to Seymour Hamilton of Colophon Communications to draft and edit the stories embedded in the statistics.

The Vanier Institute of the Family has been well-served for many years by the excellent translation services provided by Loraine Pariseault of SODES. We have called upon her once again, this time to prepare the French text entitled *Profil des familles canadiennes II*.

Profiling Canada's Families II is being published in the first months of a new century amidst great interest in what lies in store at the beginning of a new millennium. Canadians have witnessed profound demographic, economic, social, cultural and technological changes during the course of the last century. If we are to prepare well for the future, we will do so only on the basis of a sound appreciation of where we have been and where we are today. For this reason, The Vanier Institute has welcomed the contribution of Dr. Eric Sager, one of Canada's outstanding historians, whose essay reminds us that the future of Canada's families will be built, not only on the basis of

hopes and aspirations but, equally, on the foundations of memories embedded in the history of Canadian families. Dr. Sager is the Director of the Canadian Families Project which is administered at the University of Victoria and sponsored by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The Project comprises a team of historians, sociologists, geographers and demographers from five universities across Canada. Based on data collected in the enumeration for the 1901 Census of Canada, the Canadian Families Project has generously provided The Vanier Institute with a number of historical reference points that emphasize both what has changed and what has remained relatively constant in the lives of families since the beginning of this century.

The Vanier Institute of the Family gratefully acknowledges the sponsors of *Profiling Canada's Families II*. The Laidlaw Foundation is more than a generous source of financial support. It is a forward-looking institution that supports research, public education and community initiatives with a defined interest in the nation's children and young people. We acknowledge, with thanks, both their support and leadership.

The first edition of *Profiling Canada's Families* was based almost entirely on national data. In 1996, The Vanier Institute published a companion to the first edition entitled *Canada's Families – They Count* which provided comparable provincial and territorial data in order to shed some light on the distinctive patterns of family formation and functioning across the country. In *Profiling Canada's Families II*, it has been possible to provide provincial and territorial data through the support of Alberta Family and Social Services, Manitoba Family Services, New Brunswick Health and Community Services, Nova Scotia Ministry of Social Services and the Conseil de la famille et de l'enfance of the Government of Quebec.

A project of this scale calls upon every member of The Vanier Institute of the Family's staff and consultants: Lisa Dudley, Robert Glossop, Lucie Legault, Anne Mason, Donna McCloskey, Alan Mirabelli, Paula Theetge, Terri White-Lobsinger and James Patterson. All members of the Board of The Vanier Institute join me in offering our special thanks to Robert and Anne for overseeing and managing this project.

Finally, our thanks must go to the readers of the first edition of *Profiling Canada's Families* who told us that it was time to renew a resource they had found helpful. We present this second edition, *Profiling Canada's Families II*, in the hope that a better understanding of our families at the end of one century will serve their best interests in the next one.

Dr. Myer Horowitz, O.C.
President
The Vanier Institute of the Family

Introduction

We grow up in families we do not choose, but when we have grown up, most of us choose to live in families. We need support and sympathy, connection and commitment.
*Trudy Govier**

The most universal of human experiences – excepting only being born and dying – is being part of a family. We do not remember being born and none of us knows what it is to die, but we all do have an understanding of what it is to be part of a family.

When we are young, we wonder what it would be like to live in someone else's family. As we grow older, we speculate about whether our own families are conventional, normal or exceptional. Over the course of a life, we live in different kinds of families. We move from the home made for us by our parents, to the apartment we set up when just starting out to the family home we make for our own children, to the condominium or retirement home we choose after the children have left home.

We also observe that our communities are home to many different kinds of families. We see around us men and women who are married to one another and we recognize them as a family whether or not they have or intend to have children. We see men and women raising children on their own without a partner. We see unmarried couples living together, with and without children, in committed and intimate relationships, sharing their lives, providing for and caring for one another. We see gay and lesbian couples caring for each other and raising children together. We see adult children living with their parents or siblings. We see young couples just beginning their lives as families, parents with pre-schoolers and adolescents, empty-nesters who have raised children who have gone on to establish their own households and families. We see families that draw upon a wide variety of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious traditions. And, we see families that go about the daily business of family living in different ways on farms and in cities, with one earner or two.

We recognize and respect each of these families because they demonstrate how we accept responsibility for each other, as individuals. Within these families we are bound together by ties of mutual affection and obligation. The commitment of family members is even more profound. It is not simply that we are willing to support other people for their sake. In healthy families all the individuals know that their own personal wellbeing is inextricably tied to the wellbeing of their loved ones. In our families, we share not only our memories and our love and laughter but also the pain of an illness or injury, the anxiety of a job lost, the disappointment of a hope unfulfilled. In our families, our interests are very much defined by the interests of others. As Juliet said to Romeo, "...the more I give to thee, The more I have..."

*Govier, Trudy. *Dilemmas of Trust*, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998.

Though we sometimes speak of the family as an "institution," and even as the most "basic institution of society," it is an institution unlike all others. Even in the most homogenous societies, families differ in size, structure and in the way they embody social and cultural values. Moreover, families are not typical of other institutions. We may graduate (or be expelled) from our schools, leave (or be fired) from our jobs, adopt or renounce a religion or citizenship, but in that we were all born, we all have families.

Families shape and are shaped by the communities and societies in which they are embedded. Some advocate a return to what they perceive to be the superior values of the past while others would move more quickly toward what they think might be a better future for families. Arguments on both sides of the divide often rely on ideological conviction and a selective interpretation of the facts that are known. What is certain is that Canadians are passionately concerned about families and the future of families.

When Canadians look back at their parents' and grandparents' lives, they recognize patterns of both continuity and change. Most Canadians choose to live their lives with and for others in the context of the families they create, as did their parents and grandparents. However, the social and cultural, economic and technological environments in which they do so have changed dramatically over the course of the twentieth century. What families look like, what they do and how they feel are very different at the end of the twentieth century than they were at the beginning. These structural, functional and affective dimensions of family life have been profoundly changed by two world wars, the evolution of a global economy, increasing respect for human rights, the emancipation of women, the migration of populations between and within countries, as well as from the country into cities. Telephones, the Internet, air travel and so many other technological innovations taken for granted today were undreamed of by our ancestors. We live longer thanks to innovations in pharmacology, nutrition, medicine, agriculture and public health.

The twin forces of technology and economics have affected both individuals and the families to which they belong. Families are smaller. Adults wait longer to marry, if they do so at all. In fact, common-law unions are no longer just a preliminary or trial stage before marriage but, for many, an alternative to marriage. On average, Canadians wait longer to have children than did their parents or grandparents. They are more likely to separate or divorce. In less than a lifetime, the dual-earner family has gone from an exception to the norm. In the past, children growing up with only one parent were living most often with a widow or widower; today, children growing up with a lone parent are most likely to have another living parent—usually a father living elsewhere.

Profiling Canada's Families II looks at what Canadians affirm is the most important part of their lives—their families. This profile is descriptive rather than explanatory. It concentrates on what is known through Statistics Canada data on the "census family," which they define as:

> ...a now-married couple (with or without never-married sons and/or daughters of either or both spouses), a couple living common-law (again with or without never-married sons and/or daughters of either or both partners), or a lone parent of any marital status, with at least one never-married son or daughter living in the same dwelling.

Statistics Canada's definition of the "census family" focuses our attention on people who live with one another in a conjugal union (married or common-law), and on adults living with a child who has never married. The definition concerns what can be objectively measured – who lives with whom and under what circumstances. It captures

a central element of everyone's notion of a family – people living together in a long-term relationship. However, it does not deal with important matters such as the emotional bonds that continue to tie parents and children to one another, even after the children have left home. Nor does the definition of a "census family" reveal much about the relationships between siblings once they have left home or between grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins. Fortunately, Statistics Canada has surveyed other aspects of Canadian families and other researchers have shed light on these other important family ties.

We all appreciate that families are more than just collections of individuals that can be counted objectively. Families are built upon foundations of emotion, values, commitments and love. Families embody memories of the past and hopes for the future. Many first and second generation Canadians speak with pride of "my family in the old country." Many who cherish their ancestors identify with family members long deceased.

Knowing that there is more to family than meets the eye, and much more than what can be counted, The Vanier Institute of the Family defines families as:

> *...any combination of two or more persons who are bound together over time by ties of mutual consent, birth and/or adoption or placement and who, together, assume responsibilities for variant combinations of some of the following:*
>
> - *Physical maintenance and care of group members*
> - *Addition of new members through procreation or adoption*
> - *Socialization of children*
> - *Social control of members*
> - *Production, consumption, distribution of goods and services, and*
> - *Affective nurturance – love.*

This definition directs attention toward the work and accomplishments of people who commit themselves to one another over time—to what people do as distinct from where they live and how they are related to each other. It is a definition that acknowledges and respects heterosexual and same-sex couples, lone-parent families, extended patterns of kinship, step-families and blended families, couples with children and those without, the commitments of siblings one to another and the obligations and affection that unite the young and the old as their lives weave together. People in families provide for and care for one another, they teach and discipline, they are financially, economically and psychologically dependent upon one another and they love one another. Within families, we encounter the opportunity and responsibility to act not just as isolated individuals, but as spouses and lovers, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters.

On a day-by-day basis, in the homes of Canada's families:

- Parents lie awake when a child coughs, children learn how to fold the laundry, meals are prepared and shared;
- Couples plan for and await the arrival of a new baby;
- Parents read to their children, supervise homework, and volunteer in their child's classroom;
- Children learn to share their toys, to recycle paper and plastics, to respect the rights and emotions of others;

- Mothers and fathers leave home for factories and offices where, as dedicated employees, they earn the incomes with which to support their loved ones and, then at day's end, they return to the rewarding though often demanding work that goes into making a home; and,
- Anniversaries, birthdays, and graduations are celebrated, photograph albums of times together are opened and loved ones who have passed away are remembered.

We do all this with love, at least ideally. The many aspects of family relationships embody the many different meanings of love – romance, eroticism, paternal and maternal affection, bonding, brotherhood and sisterhood, altruism. We first experience love as children through its presence (or through its tragic absence) in the families into which we are born. We learn about what it means to be loved and to love in our birth families and then later when we forge families of our own. Marriage, the birth or death of a child, the death of a spouse, a divorce or separation, a remarriage—any and all of these—reshape our understandings of ourselves, of others and of the love that binds us to one another. Most of us eventually must deal with our parents' death, usually after they have passed through a period of infirmity. Eventually, we will face our own mortality and the implications for those to whom we are tied by law, custom, morality – and love.

This is the stuff of family life, and these are the shared joys and sorrows that come with the decision to live our lives with and for others. These are the experiences that count in our lives—even if Statistics Canada cannot count them. However, if we keep the emotional core of family life in mind as we examine the relevant statistics, we can see deeper significance in the trends they document.

In so vast and varied a country as Canada, national averages often conceal important differences within and across regions. In Canada there are extremes of affluence and want, advantage and disadvantage. For example, "We live in an aging society in which the average age is increasing" is an accurate statement. However, it is a generalization that hides an equally true and important observation: "The average age of the approximately one million Aboriginal people in Canada is radically lower than that of the majority, and theirs is a young population." Similarly, although on average, more women are waiting longer to have their first child, embedded within these averages, there are still teenagers and other young women bearing and raising children.

The numbers collected by Statistics Canada and other researchers as well as the interpretations offered here by The Vanier Institute of the Family describe what ***has been*** and ***what is***. This information is the necessary foundation of any practical discussions about what ***will be***, or what ***should be***. As such, *Profiling Canada's Families II* does not tell us what to think. It does, however, provide important clues to what we might think about and give us food for thought as we decide about our own and our nation's future.

Canada's Families - An Historian's Perspective

Every discussion of family today and every prediction about families in the future is grounded in history—in an interpretation of change in the past. Yet sometimes we forget that history is always with us. History is our collective memory, and as with individual memory a comfortable nostalgia competes for space with more disturbing realities. Good history challenges commonplace myths, confronts harsh realities, and forces us to look beyond individual memory. To understand families in Canada today, we must look very carefully at families in the past. We should also ask how we use the past, and pay a heavy price for forgetting it, as we think about family today and in the future.

At the beginning of a new millennium, we hear that there is a "crisis" in the family! Politicians, journalists and even a few scholars have sounded the alarm.

> *Some have cited facts such as the high rates of divorce, and changes in the older sexual morality... as evidence of a trend to disorganization in an absolute sense.*

Modern living arrangements cater to single people or couples, leaving no room for the old three-generation "extended" family.

> *The home has passed, or at least is passing, out of existence. In place of it is the apartment – an incomplete thing, a mere part of something, where children are an intrusion, where hospitality is done through a caterer, and where Christmas is only the twenty-fifth of December.*

The selfish individualism of a "me" generation dissolves all collective loyalties.

> *We may expect to see further disintegration until the family shall disappear... In all things civil and sacred the tendency of the age is towards individualism....its plausible aphorisms and popular usages silently undermining the divine institution of the family.*

These quotations are from careful observers of North American society. But do they reflect important truths about the state of the family at the end of the twentieth century? No – they do not. The first quotation is from the American sociologist Talcott Parsons. He wrote those words in 1955, in the middle of a decade portrayed in countless movies, television series and books as the heyday of a traditional family. The second quotation is from a serious essay by the Canadian political economist and humorist Stephen Leacock, published in 1915. The third quotation is from an essay by a Protestant minister in Ontario, John Laing, writing in the year 1878.[1]

The "crisis" in the family has been with us for a long time. In every generation for more than a century a vocal minority has predicted the death of the family. So far every rumour of its death has been premature. If history teaches us a single lesson about families in modern times, it is this: families and households are variable and flexible, but durable. Families and households change over time and across space. But change is not the same as crisis.

At the beginning of the twentieth century many social reformers feared that industrialization and urbanization were undermining the family by separating the home from the workplace and by placing male breadwinners in factories, away from their families for very long hours. Another lesson from history in Stephen Leacock's time was that children had become "an intrusion" or an economic burden. Compulsory school attendance, which began in Ontario in the 1870s and spread to other provinces, was followed by Factory Acts limiting the right to hire children as wage earners. Children no longer contributed directly to the family economy from a very young age. Many reformers concluded that parents placed less value on their children.

Other social reformers, reading the history of the industrial revolution, concluded that there was a crisis for elderly people. As the industrial economy found less use for the skills of the elderly, elders were laid off. Without means of support, and neglected by their families, old people were crowding into insane asylums, houses of refuge, and hospitals. Behind the undervaluing of children and the neglect of elders lay the problem identified by John Laing: a selfish individualism pervaded modern industrial society, and it was undermining the bonds of loyalty and duty that sustained all families.

Behind much of the alarm over family at the end of the twentieth century lies an interpretation of the history of divorce. Divorce rates in Canada shot upwards after the federal Divorce Act of 1968. But the fear of divorce as a destroyer of family life goes back much further in time, and is poorly connected to the actual number of divorces being granted. At the beginning of the twentieth century many politicians were alarmed: would Canada remain a divorce-free country, or would we allow divorce as easily as they did in the United States? "Where will this country come to in twenty-five years if we are going to grant divorces simply because some woman has been disappointed in regard to her husband...? The whole social fabric of the country would go to pieces."[2] Like other anxieties, this one was also buttressed by historical argument. Politicians believed that in the past Canada had been almost completely divorce-free. In the 1890s there were twelve legal divorces a year on average in the whole of Canada. The annual average jumped to 26 in the first decade of the twentieth century, and then to 54 a year between 1911 and 1914. Politicians alarmed about divorce offered an interpretation of history: in the past social stability depended on the stability of families; in the immediate past divorce was increasing; therefore both family and society were at risk.

The "crisis" in the family was, as it remains, an argument about change, and a reading – or misreading – of history. Those who believe that the family is in crisis are making a historical statement: they are saying that there was a time of relative stability at some point in the past, and that forces of change are eroding that stability and its necessary conditions. Those who say that a "traditional family" is disappearing are saying that at some point in the past a certain family type was normal or typical, over time and space; some historical conditions are causing its decline.

All too often we rely on small slices of the past, personal memory, or images of our own parents and grandparents, and we mistake these for history. We compare today's divorce rates with our memory of family, forgetting how that memory becomes filtered and censored over time. History tells us, as memory cannot do, that marriage became *more* popular in the twentieth century: a larger proportion of Canadians in the last decades of the twentieth century would marry at some point in their lives than did their ancestors of the late nineteenth century. Most people who divorce also try marriage again.

A century ago, we misread history by confusing legal divorce with the breakdown of marriage. We know that many marriages broke down in the nineteenth century and that couples separated without ever getting a divorce. There is no way to estimate accurately the number of such separations. Many marriages collapsed in the nineteenth century because of the voluntary separation of spouses, the departure of one spouse from the marital home, or the death of a spouse. The result was that there were almost as many single-parent families in Canada in 1901 as there were at the end of the twentieth century.

The intact family of the past was a complex social space. It was the site of great loyalty and love; it was often the site of exploitation, abuse and violence. Much of the violence went unrecorded, in part because the dominant culture thought it to be normal and even necessary: corporal punishment was part of schooling and of discipline within the family; husbands could beat wives and children in order to "correct" their behaviour. When courts handed out ludicrously short sentences for brutal assaults, and when collective forms of protection were weak, leaving one's spouse or family was often the only defence against violence or abuse.

We also know that "official" census reports under-estimated both divorce and single-parenting in the nineteenth century and for much of the twentieth century. Published census returns missed many single parents (lodgers or domestic servants with children, for instance). Single-parenting was as commonplace a century ago as it was in the 1990s, but the causes of single-parenting were different. Many more single parents in 1901 were widows. The effects of single parenting were much the same as today, however. Single parents, especially women, were economically vulnerable. The widow was often without a stable job. She would survive by taking in lodgers, growing vegetables, keeping a few chickens, doing laundry, or sewing garments in the "sweated trades" that flourished in the city a century ago. Her children helped with the sewing, scrounged food, hauled water, and gathered cinders from the rail yards to help heat the home.

It is all too easy, both in the past and today, to focus on single-parenting as though it were the source rather than the symptom of family problems. We should remember that most poor families were two-parent families, in the 1890s and the 1990s.

Laments about the loss of family time miss both the lessons of history, and the material base of the problem. Such laments often reduce the problem to a single cause: the of women's employment or single parenthood. Single parents have a serious problem of "family time" – the difficulty of finding adequate time for children, between the burdens of jobs, commuting, and housework. The problem is even more serious if the single parent is one of the so-called "sandwich generation" – having to give support both to children and to elderly family members at the same time. But these problems are not those of single parents alone. They are shared by two-parent families, and the problems are most acute among those with low incomes. Yet history tells us that the problem of family time was much more serious a century ago, and even in the early twentieth century, when a smaller proportion of women had paid jobs. A century ago working hours were much longer: those in the wage-paid labour force worked 60 hours a week or more. And even if married women did not have paid jobs, what were they doing? The answer is that they were working most of the time: they worked on the family farm; they did the cooking, the cleaning, the laundry, and they did this work without the labour-saving machines that became part of most Canadian homes in the last half of the twentieth century. Who looked after the children? Children went to school, or they were cared for by older siblings or by neighbours – or they looked after themselves, from a very young age. The term "latch key children" was unknown because it was normal for children to spend time by themselves.

History also tells us that children today are surrounded by adults, far more than were children of the past. Why is this so? Because of demography – the inescapable effects of population change, effects all too often forgotten by those who rely on memory alone. Death rates have fallen dramatically over the last century and life expectancy has increased. A century ago about 5 percent of the Canadian population was aged 65 or over; today the proportion of elders is around 14 percent and it is rising. And birth rates have fallen: a century ago the average number of children born to a Canadian woman was around five; today the average is slightly under two. The result is that the ratio of children to elders has shifted dramatically. A century ago, for every hundred children in the population (those aged 14 and under) there were only 14 or 15 elders. Today there are 60 elders for every hundred children! And do those elders have time for children? The answer is yes. The median age of retirement is 62. A very large proportion of elders live within easy driving distance of their children and grandchildren. The revolutions in transportation and communication have given an enormous boost to family togetherness.

History tells us that in the past "family" was equated with household – the group that lived in the same dwelling. Statistics Canada still defines the census "family" as a co-resident group – a couple (married or common-law) with or without children or a single parent with a child. The meaning of family has changed. In popular uses and in social reality "family" is much more flexible. For example, most elders live in their own homes rather than the homes of their children; yet they are no less part of the family.

The word "family" is becoming disconnected from its roots in the patriarchal household. We can no longer define family as the group of people related to, or under the authority of a male "head." Both the word and the reality that it identifies are being extended to include new combinations of people who offer emotional, moral and economic support to each other on a regular basis.

How new is this reality? Even when family was equated with household, variety and flexibility were the norm. The so-called "nuclear family" was not dominant everywhere, either in Europe or North America. For example, in British Columbia a century ago, over a third of the population did not live with "family" members (relations by kin or marriage). They lived alone or they lived with people who were not their relatives. Of all households in British Columbia in 1901, almost a third consisted of men only! They lived in boarding houses, logging camps, mining camps, and similar all-male dwellings. British Columbia was unusual, but it was an extreme example of a more general trend: a century ago people were much more likely to live with non-kin, people who were not their relatives. Today's "non-traditional" households – the household of people of the same sex, or the household of adults without children, or the co-operative household of unrelated people – have their own traditions.

Today we see different family and household forms among the recent immigrants to Canada. But is this a new reality? History tells us that families and households have always varied among ethnic and immigrant groups. Asian immigrants were often men, living without wives, children or other relatives. Complex households (multiple-family households or extended-family households) were more common among French Canadians than among people of British or other European ethnicity. The households of Native peoples were even more likely to be complex, and European newcomers were often baffled by the kinship networks of support and co-operation that were so important among the First Nations.

The history of Canadian families tells us that families are flexible and durable, performing a complex range of functions. They exist for the bearing and raising of children, and for much more; they provide emotional and moral support; they can be a source of language and learning; they are a means of individual and collective survival. Families are best defined by their functions, not their form. But history tells us that family cannot always perform its functions alone. Family is the first line of defence against poverty. But by itself, without other collective supports, and faced with problems of poverty, unemployment, and disease, it often failed. A century ago governments did not collect taxes sufficient to allow the construction of sewage systems, water supply systems, adequate hospitals, and eventually medicare. Whatever its form and however important as a defence against poverty, family could not by itself provide these things.

And so children died, in large numbers. In the working-class neighborhoods of Canadian cities a century ago, one of every three or four babies died before they reached their first birthday. They died of preventable diseases, including the diseases of poverty. The lesson is that families work best, and survive intact, when society works to provide the collective supports on which all families depend.

Change is a constant; the form is variable and flexible; the family itself remains intact. Change is not the same as crisis. We know family by what it does, not by any single "traditional" form. Think, for a moment, of one of English-Canada's most famous families. A fictional family, to be sure, but a very believable one: it consists of an elderly spinster, her brother, and a non-kin child named Anne of Green Gables. By Statistics Canada's definition of "census family," this small group is not a family. It is certainly not a traditional nuclear family. Yet we all know it to be a family, not by its form but by what these three people did with and for each other. There were many such families in our past and there are many today.

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Director, Canadian Families Project
University of Victoria

[1]Talcott Parsons, "The American Family: Its Relations to Personality and the Social Structure," in T.Parsons and R.F.Bales, Family, Socialization and Interaction Process (1955); Stephen Leacock, "The Woman Question" (1915); Rev. John Laing, "The Family: God's Appointed Institution" (Dundas, 1878).
[2]E.A.Lancaster, MP, in House of Commons Debates, 1905, cited in James G. Snell, "'The White Life for Two': The Defence of Marriage and Sexual Morality in Canada, 1890-1914," Histoire sociale/Social History (May 1983).

Technical Notes

1. Definitions

Profiling Canada's Families II relies in large measure on data derived from the most recent Census of Canada conducted by Statistics Canada in 1996. As such, Statistics Canada's definition of the *census family* is the principal foundation on which the statistical profiles presented here have been built.

> **A Census Family** refers to:
>
> ...a now-married couple (with or without never-married sons and/or daughters or either or both spouses), a couple living common-law (again with or without never-married sons and/or daughters or either or both partners), or a lone parent of any marital status, with at least one never-married son or daughter living in the same dwelling.

Data presented here pertaining to the numbers and proportions of families living below the Low-Income Cut-Off Lines are based on the somewhat broader definition of the *economic family*. According to Statistics Canada,

> **An Economic Family** refers to:
>
> ...a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law or adoption.

2. Data Analysis and Presentations

All Charts and Tables included in support of the statistical profiles presented have been prepared by the Centre for International Statistics at the Canadian Council on Social Development and/or DataQuest. Data acquisition and preliminary analysis was undertaken by the Centre for International Statistics at the Canadian Council on Social Development. Further analysis and interpretation was provided by DataQuest.

3. Canadian Families Project

Data presented pertaining to families in 1901 was provided by the Canadian Families Project located at the University of Victoria, British Columbia. It should be noted that:

> The 1901 census grouped people by a broad definition that merged family and household. A family or household could include a person living alone, or any group of blood relations and non-kin who resided together in a "housekeeping community." To make 1901 data comparable to data from the 1990s, a 5% random sample of the 1901 census was created by the Canadian Families Project. That sample contains 265,287 persons, who have been regrouped as closely as possible to the Statistics Canada definition of family. It is not possible to identify common-law couples in 1901. This makes little difference to the results, however, because it is possible to identify single parents, and all children residing with a parent can be connected to their parent in a "census family."

4. Nunavut and the Northwest Territories

Population counts in *Profiling Canada's Families II* are derived from the 1996 census which was conducted prior to the creation of Canada's newest Territory of Nunavut April 1, 1999. Thus, the provincial/territorial profiles presented here provide data about the Northwest Territories as it was defined geographically at the time of the census.

CANADA'S FAMILIES— WHO THEY ARE

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The Vanier Institute of the Family

1. Canada's people, Canada's families

Over the course of the twentieth century, the population of Canada has increased fivefold from approximately 5.4 million in 1901 to just under 30 million in 1996. According to the 1996 census, there were 28.8 million people in Canada. Of these, 24.8 million lived with one or more relatives and 23.9 million lived within "census families," (defined as husbands and wives or common-law partners with or without never-married children, as well as lone-parents and their never-married children). Canada's 7.8 million census families varied in type, structure, living arrangements and lifestyles.

More people lived in a census family in Newfoundland and New Brunswick (85%) than the Canadian average (83%). Slightly below the national norm were Yukon, British Columbia and Manitoba (81%). More people lived with their relatives in Newfoundland and the Northwest Territories (now the Western Northwest Territories and Nunavut) than the Canadian average (92% and 90%, respectively). At the other end of the scale, only 83% of people in Yukon lived with relatives while Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia were slightly below the national norm at 84%.

Canadians who lived alone in a private household were fewer than one in ten. Ten percent of those aged 25 to 54 lived alone. Generally, the likelihood of living alone increases as people grow older. The percentage increased to 14% among those aged 55 to 64, to 30% among those aged 64 to 74, and to 33% of those 75 and over. Half of all seniors aged 75 and over lived in private dwellings, most of them with their spouse. However, less than one half of seniors who are women lived with their spouse (42%), as compared to seven out of ten men. By contrast, almost all children—over 99%—lived in families.

Less than half a million Canadians lived in some kind of collective dwelling. Five percent of these people were in correctional and penal institutions, 15% in hotels and rooming houses, 6% were in Hutterite colonies and 5% lived in religious institutions. Institutions such as chronic-care hospitals accounted for two-thirds (66%) of Canadians in collective dwellings. Almost half of these, nearly 300,000 people, were aged 75 or over, and required special care.

And so what?

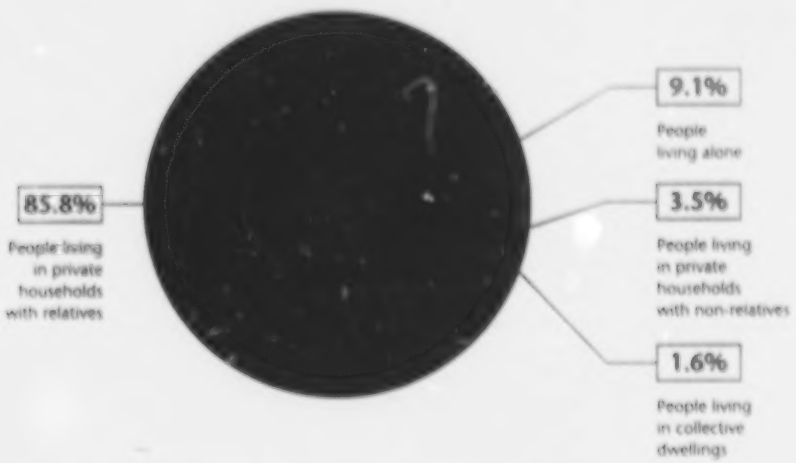
Not all of Canada's families are included in the statistical definition of a census family. For example, an adult brother and sister sharing a home do not appear among the 7.8 million recorded families. Nor does a same-sex couple maintaining a household together. Nor does a previously married child who moves back home to live with her widowed mother. And yet they may all benefit from the mutual support and love they experience in these families.

25

The definitions that Statistics Canada has employed to track the number and characteristics of families and households have changed during the last century. Even so, analysis of the 1901 census reveals that back then close to nine out of ten Canadians were living in families, a figure perhaps surprisingly close to today's proportion.

(See **Technical Notes** for definitions).

1. Canada's Population, Private and Collective Households (1996)



Total Population in Private and Collective Households, by Province (1996)

	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
Percentage Distribution of Population in Private and Collective Dwellings, 1996													
% in collective dwellings	1.6%	1.1%	2.0%	1.4%	1.4%	1.8%	1.3%	2.4%	2.0%	1.8%	1.2%	2.5%	1.1%
% living alone in private households	9.1	4.9	7.7	8.4	7.4	10.8	8.3	10.0	10.0	8.2	9.7	9.4	5.2
% living with relatives in private households	85.8	92.0	87.6	87.0	87.9	84.4	87.1	84.4	84.9	85.7	85.9	83.1	89.5
% living in private households with other non-relatives	3.5	2.1	2.7	3.2	3.2	3.0	3.3	3.2	3.1	4.3	5.2	5.0	4.1
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Sources: Population, Occupied Private Dwellings, Private Households, Collective Dwellings, Population in Collective Dwellings, Average Number of Persons per Private Household, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1961-1996 Censuses (100% Data) 93F0030XDB96006. Population in Private Households by Age Groups (17A) and Sex (3), Showing Living Arrangements (11), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1996 Census (20% Sample Data) (93F22010.ivt).

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2. Longer lives and smaller families – an aging society

In the second half of the twentieth century, more babies survived infancy and childhood than ever before, and the life expectancy of Canadians increased significantly. Between 1951 and 1996, the proportion of the population aged 65 and over increased by 50% (from 8% in 1951 to 12% in 1996). On average, women live longer than men; after age 70, women increasingly outnumbered men of the same age.

The structure of the Canadian population is uniquely shaped by age. The post-war baby-boomers born during the two decades following World War II made up almost one-third of the population in 1996. By 1966 when the baby boom had come to an end, fully one-half of the population of Canada was under the age of 21. Thirty years later, when the boomers were in their 30s and 40s, fewer than one out of three Canadians were younger than 21 years of age.

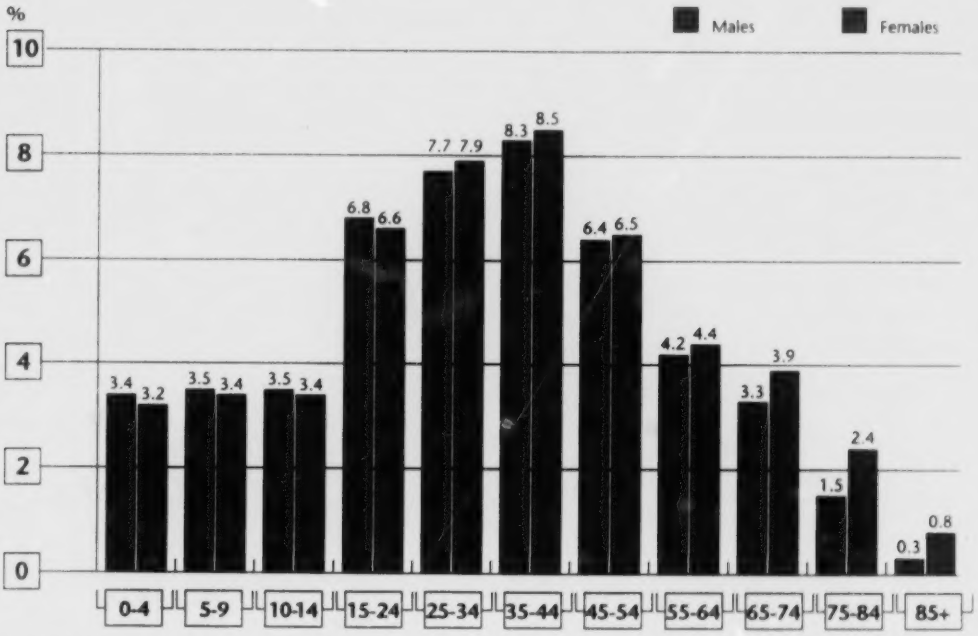
The youthful exceptions were Nunavut, where close to half the population was under the age of 21, and the Western Northwest Territories with a little more than one-third of the population comprised of children and young people. Among the provinces, Saskatchewan's population was somewhat younger than the national norm, while Quebec and British Columbia had, on average, somewhat older populations.

And so what?

By outnumbering both the previous generations and the one that followed them, baby-boomers have exerted a major influence on Canada's economy, politics and public policy priorities. Canada's overall population has continued to grow because so many boomers had children. However, the fertility *rate* of 1.6 in 1996 has fallen below the "replacement" *rate* of 2.1 children per woman. Canadians have chosen to "plan" their families and on the whole have chosen to bear fewer children.

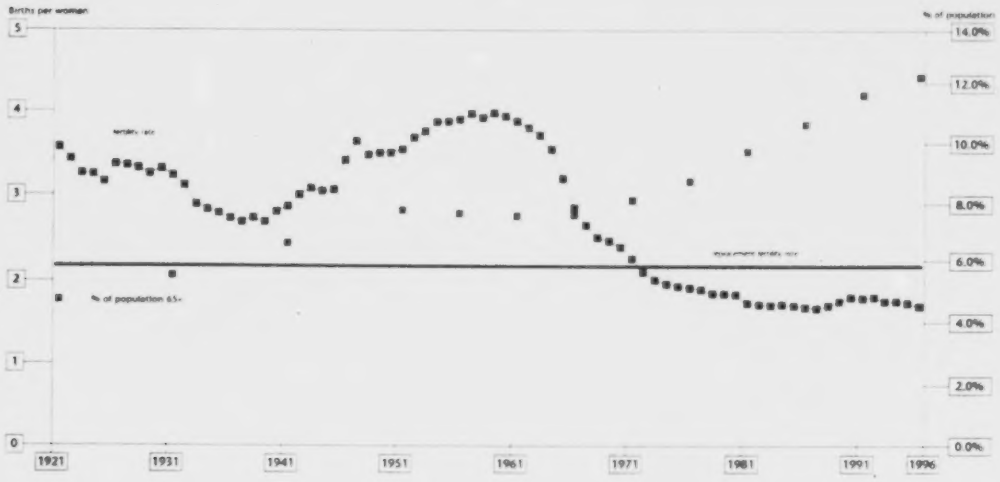
Today, approximately 12.2% of Canada's population is 65 years of age or older. A hundred years ago, no more than 5% of the nation's population was over 65. Looking to the future, estimates suggest that about one in four Canadians will be 65 or older in the year 2036. In the absence of a significant increase in Canada's fertility rate - which most observers think is unlikely - growth in the overall size of the population will be the result of immigration.

2. Age Structure of the Canadian Population, Males and Females (1996)



Source: Statistics Canada 1996 Census, 93F22002.ivt.

2a. Total Fertility Rate and Percentage of the Population Aged 65 and over (1921-1996)



Sources: fertility rate, 1921 to 1965: Fertility in Canada: From Baby-boom to Baby-bust (1984). Cat.#91-524E, Table 1.1, 1966 to 1992, Canadian Families at the Approach of the Year 2000; for 1993 to 1995, The Daily; for 1996, Annual Demographic Statistics 1998, Cat. #91-213. Population 65 and over, 1996 Census, Nation Series, Catalogue 93F0020XCB96004.
Beaujot, Roderick (1991) *Population Change in Canada: The Challenges of Policy Adaptation*, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.
Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, Population by single years of age (111), 1996 (93F22001.ivt).

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2b. Age structure of the Canadian Population by Province (1996)

[redacted]	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
Total	28,846,780	551,795	134,560	909,285	738,130	7,138,783	10,763,575	1,113,895	990,240	2,696,830	3,724,500	30,765	64,405
Percentage based on total population													
% Male													
0-4 years	3.4%	2.9%	3.5%	3.1%	3.1%	3.3%	3.5%	3.7%	3.6%	3.7%	3.2%	3.9%	6.0%
5-9 years	3.5	3.4	3.7	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8	4.0	4.0	3.4	4.4	5.7
10-14 years	3.5	3.9	3.8	3.5	3.6	3.3	3.5	3.7	4.2	4.0	3.5	4.2	5.0
15-24 years	6.6	8.1	7.4	6.8	7.3	6.7	6.6	7.0	7.3	7.1	6.6	6.8	8.2
25-34 years	7.7	7.5	7.1	7.4	7.6	7.6	7.8	7.4	6.7	8.1	7.8	8.4	9.5
35-44 years	8.3	8.2	7.5	8.0	8.2	8.6	8.1	7.9	7.7	9.0	8.4	10.5	8.0
45-54 years	6.4	6.6	6.3	6.5	6.6	6.8	6.3	5.9	5.5	6.0	6.6	7.6	5.2
55-64 years	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.4	4.3	4.0	4.0	3.6	4.3	3.5	2.4
65-74 years	3.3	3.0	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.6	2.7	3.4	1.7	1.0
75-84 years	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.4	1.5	1.9	2.2	1.3	1.7	0.5	0.4
85 years and over	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.1
% Female													
0-4 years	3.2%	2.7%	3.2%	3.0%	2.9%	3.1%	3.3%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.0%	3.7%	5.7%
5-9 years	3.4	3.3	3.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.4	3.6	3.9	3.8	3.2	3.8	5.6
10-14 years	3.4	3.8	3.7	3.3	3.4	3.1	3.3	3.5	3.9	3.8	3.3	4.1	4.5
15-24 years	6.6	7.9	7.0	6.8	7.1	6.5	6.4	6.8	7.0	6.9	6.4	6.4	7.9
25-34 years	7.9	8.0	7.3	7.7	7.7	7.6	8.1	7.4	6.9	8.1	7.9	9.1	9.4
35-44 years	8.5	8.5	7.8	8.4	8.4	8.7	8.5	7.9	7.7	8.8	8.6	10.1	7.2
45-54 years	6.5	6.6	6.3	6.6	6.5	6.9	6.4	6.0	5.4	5.6	6.5	6.3	4.3
55-64 years	4.4	4.0	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.7	4.5	4.1	4.1	3.7	4.3	2.8	2.1
65-74 years	3.9	3.2	3.6	3.9	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.1	3.9	1.3	0.9
75-84 years	2.4	2.1	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.9	3.1	1.9	2.5	0.6	0.4
85 years and over	0.8	0.6	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.8	1.4	1.2	0.6	0.3	0.1	0.2

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, Population by Five Year Age Groups, 1996 (93F22002.ivt).

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"As we grow older, we can expect our siblings to become evermore important to our well-being. This will be especially true for those of us who are baby boomers. Traditionally, older people...relied on their children for emotional and practical support." But because our generation has had fewer children, we may face our elder years with our siblings rather than with children. Sibling relationships may "become the 'family glue' that keeps us together." We will turn to our brothers and sisters for "practical support and emotional connection, and for an irreplaceable sense of belonging."
—Maureen Maclachlan, *Family Connections*

Kith & Kin: Sibling Ties and Aging, *Family Connections*, 1997:17.

3. Canada's first families

In 1996, approximately 800,000 census respondents identified themselves as having Aboriginal origins, making up 3% of the total Canadian population. About two-thirds were North American Indians, another quarter were Métis and about 5% were Inuit. Nine out of ten First Nations people (North American Indians) lived in Ontario, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Quebec *(these are listed in order of the size of their North American Indian population).*

The Prairie Provinces, British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec were home to most of the Métis people. Most Inuit lived in the Western Northwest Territories and Nunavut, Quebec, and Newfoundland. In all provinces and territories except Newfoundland and the Northwest Territories, North American Indians made up the majority of the Aboriginal population. In the Western Northwest Territories and Nunavut, the majority were Inuit, while Newfoundland had roughly the same number of all three Aboriginal peoples.

More than four out of five Aboriginal people (86%) lived west of Quebec, many of them in cities. Ontario and British Columbia had 140,000 Aboriginal people each. They made up 1.3% of Ontario's total population and 3.8% of British Columbia's. Manitoba had the largest proportion of Aboriginal people at 11.7%, closely followed by Saskatchewan at 11.4%. The 70,000 Aboriginal people in Quebec represented one percent of that province's population. Fully 84% of Nunavut's and 48% of Western Northwest Territories' population was of aboriginal origin, as was 20% of Yukon's.

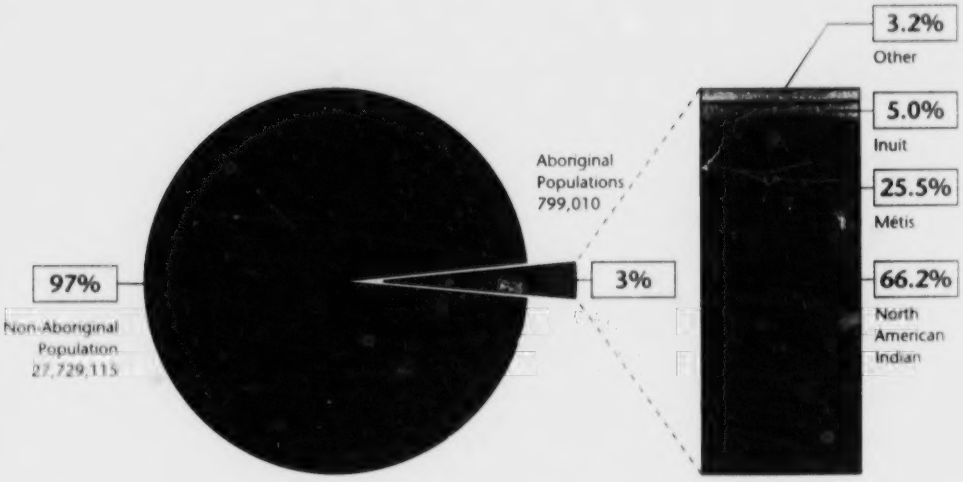
More than half of all Aboriginal people (488,000) were registered under the Indian Act, and nearly half of them (46.6% or 227,000 people) lived on reserves.

There were 491 Aboriginal children under the age of five for every 1,000 Aboriginal women of childbearing age. The comparable figure for Canada was 290 children per 1,000 women of childbearing age. Almost one-third of Aboriginal children under the age of 15 lived in a lone-parent family, which is twice the rate of the general population.

And so what?

Although the fertility rate among the Aboriginal population has been declining, it has not fallen as dramatically as the overall national fertility rate. Consequently, the Aboriginal people of Canada are a "younger" population than Canada's as a whole. Approximately one in five First Nations people live in a major city, and this proportion is growing. More live in Winnipeg (nearly 46,000) than in the Western Northwest Territories and Nunavut combined. Edmonton and Vancouver are home to 33,000 and 31,000 Aboriginal people respectively.

3. Aboriginal Populations (1996)



Note: North American Indian, Métis and Inuit are single responses. Other includes Multiple Aboriginal responses and other aboriginal response.

	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
Aboriginal Population as % of total population	2.8%	2.6%	0.7%	1.4%	1.4%	1.0%	1.3%	11.7%	11.4%	4.6%	3.8%	20.1%	61.9%

Source: Statistics Canada 1996 Census, Total Population by Age Groups (11), and Sex (3), Showing Aboriginal Groups (8), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1996 Census (20% Sample Data) ATAB2.ivt.

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4. Who calls Canada home today?

More than four out of five Canadians in 1996 were born in Canada, many of them into families that have lived in Canada for generations.

People who immigrated to this country made up 17% of the population in 1996—a total of close to 5 million Canadians. This included both recent arrivals and men and women who came to Canada nearly a lifetime ago. Over half (57%) of Canadians not born in Canada have lived here for 15 years or more, one in five for 35 or more years.

In 1911, almost a quarter of the Canadian population was immigrant, most of them recently arrived from Europe, particularly the United Kingdom. More than half (55%) were destined for Western Canada. By the end of the 1990's, 54.7% of new Canadians chose Ontario as their new home and nearly one in four people in both Ontario and British Columbia were born outside of Canada .

In the first half of the twentieth century, Canada's immigration policy favoured Europeans. After the Second World War, Europeans no longer emigrated in large numbers. By the end of the century, the leading countries of origin for Ontario were Hong Kong (9%) the People's Republic of China, India, the Philippines and Sri Lanka (7% each). Similarly, in British Columbia, more than one fifth (21%) of recent immigrants were born in Hong Kong, 13% in China, and 11% in Taiwan. Even so, the largest proportion of Canadians not born in Canada came from the United Kingdom (13%). Next was Italy with 7%, and the United States, Hong Kong, India and China with 5% each.

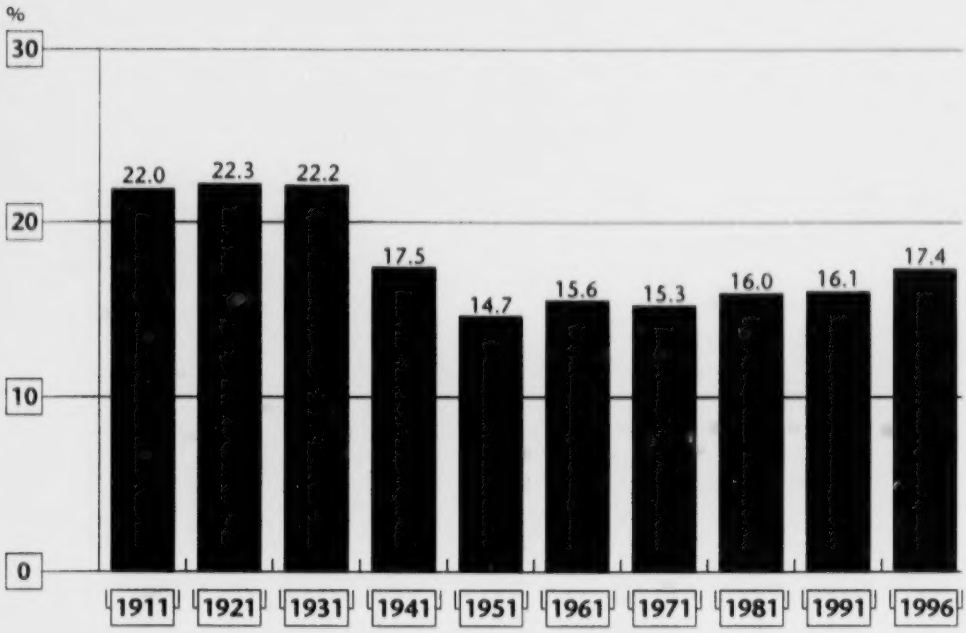
And so what?

At the beginning of the century, almost six out of every ten Canadians identified themselves as having British origins (English, Scottish, Irish or Welsh). Another three out of ten acknowledged French ancestry.

New Canadians move to cities, especially Toronto and Vancouver. Seven out of ten immigrants to British Columbia are in Vancouver, where they account for more than one third of residents (35%). Four out of ten people living in Toronto were not born in Canada.

The people of Canada have and will continue to call upon a diverse range of ethnic, religious and cultural traditions. Over the course of the last century, increasing numbers of Canadians have chosen to marry someone of a different background and their children of mixed ancestry are shaped by the distinctive ethnic, cultural and religious beliefs and practices of their parents.

4. Immigrant Population as Percentage of Total Population



	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
1911	NA	2.7%	7.4%	5.2%	7.3%	20.1%	41.4%	49.5%	56.8%	56.9%	54.8%	1.8%
1951	1.1	2.6	4.5	3.9	5.6	18.5	21.7	21.1	25.5	29.1	17.9	6.5
1981	1.9	3.7	5.0	3.9	8.2	23.6	14.2	8.7	16.3	23.1	12.4	6.0
1996	1.6	3.3	4.7	3.3	9.4	25.6	12.4	5.4	15.2	24.5	10.4	4.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Nation Series, CD-ROM, Cat. No. 93F0020XCB96004.

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5.Let's talk

Canada is a multilingual country with two official languages. At the end of the 1990's, more than half of Canadians named English as their mother tongue and almost one quarter named French as their first language. Less than 1% claimed both French and English. The remaining 17.5% named some other language or a combination of languages as the language they learned at birth.

The languages people spoke differed by province and region. In Quebec, 81% spoke French as their first language, 9% spoke a language other than English or French, and 8.3% spoke English as their first language.

New immigration patterns provide Canada's mosaic with fresh mother tongues. At the end of the twentieth century, Chinese was the most common language after English and French, having increased 42% in the 90s to more than 716,000 people. The next most common languages learned at birth and still spoken were the Slavic languages (more than 625,000), followed by Italian (485,000), German (450,000) and Indo-Iranian (430,000).

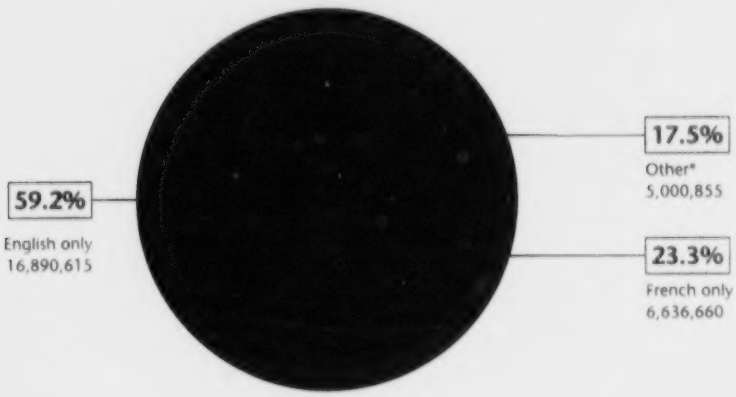
Regardless of the language of origin, on a day-by-day basis, 69% of Canadians spoke English in their families, 23% French and 11% some other language. In Newfoundland, English was spoken in 99% of all families. Predictably, the story was somewhat different in the three provinces that received almost 90% of recent immigrants to Canada. In Ontario, 14.5% of families spoke some language other than English or French at home; in British Columbia, the equivalent percentage was 14.1%; and in Quebec, 84% spoke French in the home, 12% spoke English and 7% some other language.

Just over 25% of the Aboriginal population had an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue. Cree, Inuktitut and Ojibway were the most commonly reported in the 1996 census. Three out of ten Aboriginal people reported that they were able to carry on a conversation in one of the many native languages.

And so what?

Canada continues to be a country of many cultures and languages. More than one-third (35.8%) of immigrants arrive speaking English or French as a learned or mother tongue. More than half (61%) of the people born outside Canada speak either French, or (more likely) English at home, even though neither is their mother tongue.

5. Canadian Population by First Language (1996)



Chinese	715,635
Italian	484,495
German	450,135
Spanish	212,885
Portuguese	211,290
English and French	107,945
English and other	249,540
French and other	35,845
English, French and other	9,230

*Other includes single and multiple responses.

Source: Statistics Canada 1996 – Nation Series – Population by Detailed Mother Tongue (156) and Sex (3), Showing Age Groups (15A), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1991 and 1996 Censuses (20% Sample Data).

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6. Faith and family

Eighty-one percent of Canadians say they believe in God[1]. At the end of the twentieth century, nearly eight out of ten Canadians identified themselves as Christians. Roman Catholics made up 45% of the population, Protestants 34%. All other religions (or no religion) accounted for the remaining 21%.

Interestingly, the averages for Canada as a whole did not reflect the situation in any of the provinces. Quebec was predominantly Roman Catholic (86%); in New Brunswick Roman Catholics made up a bare majority (51%). Prince Edward Island was closest to the average with 46% Roman Catholic, but Ontario was below at 34%. In the West, Roman Catholics made up roughly a quarter of the population, with Manitoba at 26%, Saskatchewan 29%, Alberta 23% and British Columbia 21%.

Protestants predominated in Newfoundland (65%), but they made up only 5% of the population of Quebec. Roughly half of the populations of the other provinces were Protestant, ranging between 54% in Saskatchewan and 42% in Ontario.

East of Quebec, the number of people who were neither Roman Catholic nor Protestant was statistically negligible. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan they accounted for 3%, in Quebec and British Colombia approximately 4%, and in Ontario 8%.

Fifteen percent of Canadians said they have no religion. This group which has been growing steadily since 1961, was largest in British Columbia at 31%, and smallest (nearly none) in Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick.

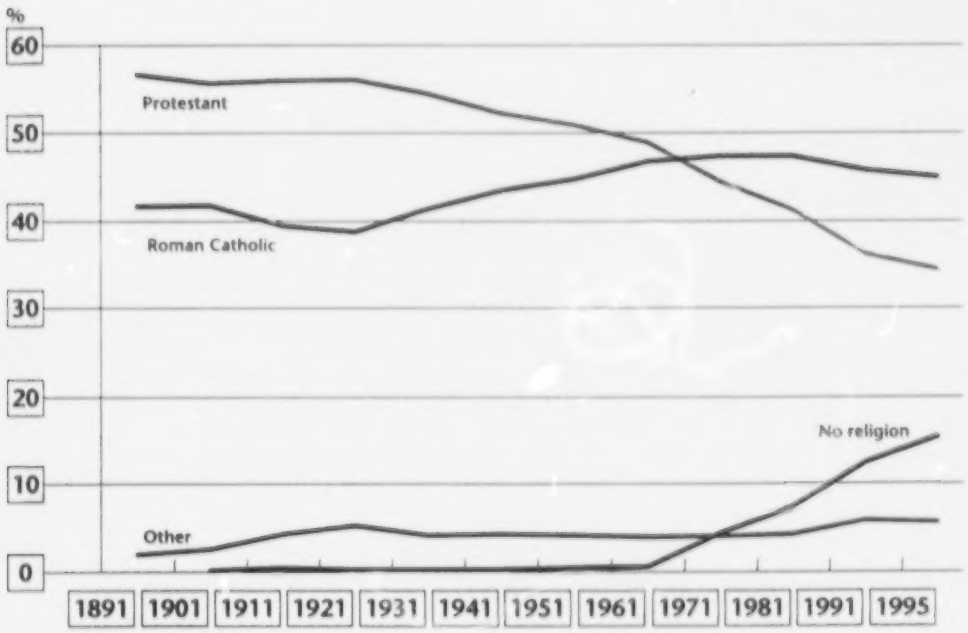
In 1891, almost 2% of Canadians reported religions other than Christian. Today, six percent of Canadians do so. In 1996, 3% of Canadians declared themselves to be "other non-Protestant" – mostly independent Christian churches. Eastern Orthodox Christians made up 1.4% of all Canadians, and 1% were Jewish, most of them living in Ontario and Quebec. Together, the followers of Islam, Buddhists and Sikhs represented 3% of the population.

And so what?

There is, of course, a distinction between religious affiliation and religious observance. In 1996, 32% of adults declaring affiliation with a religion did not attend religious services at all. Back in 1946, more than two out of three respondents to a Gallup poll had attended a religious service in the previous week. By 1996, only one in five had done so.[2]

[1]As reported in Warren Clark "Religious Observance: Marriage and Family," *Canadian Social Trends*, Autumn, 1998. 6.
[2]Ibid 6.

6. Religious Affiliation of Canadians



	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	1995
Roman Catholic	41.6%	41.7%	39.4%	38.7%	41.3%	43.4%	44.7%	46.7%	47.3%	47.3%	45.7%	44.9%
Protestant	56.5	55.6	55.9	56.0	54.4	52.2	50.9	48.9	44.4	41.2	36.2	34.4
Other	1.9	2.5	4.2	5.2	4.1	4.2	4.1	3.9	4.0	4.2	5.8	5.6
No Religion	N/A	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.5	4.3	7.3	12.4	15.3

Source: Statistics Canada's Census, various years, 1995 data based on calculations from General Social Survey, 1995 Cycle 10

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7. City lights vs. rural delights

At the beginning of the new millennium, one-third of all Canadians lived in three cities: Toronto (14.8%), Montreal (11.5%) and Vancouver (6.3%). Canada's top ten cities comprised half of the nation's population, and nearly eight out of ten Canadians lived in one of the many growing urban areas. Between 1991 and 1996, Vancouver's population increased by 14%, Oshawa by 12%, Calgary and Toronto by 9%.

Ontario, British Columbia, Alberta and Quebec had the highest proportion of urban dwellers: approximately 80% of their populations. The least urban provinces were the Northwest Territories (43%), Prince Edward Island (44%) and New Brunswick (49%). Surprisingly, Ontario was also home to the largest number of Canadians living in rural areas – 1.8 million, or almost 30% of the total 6.3 million rural Canadians.

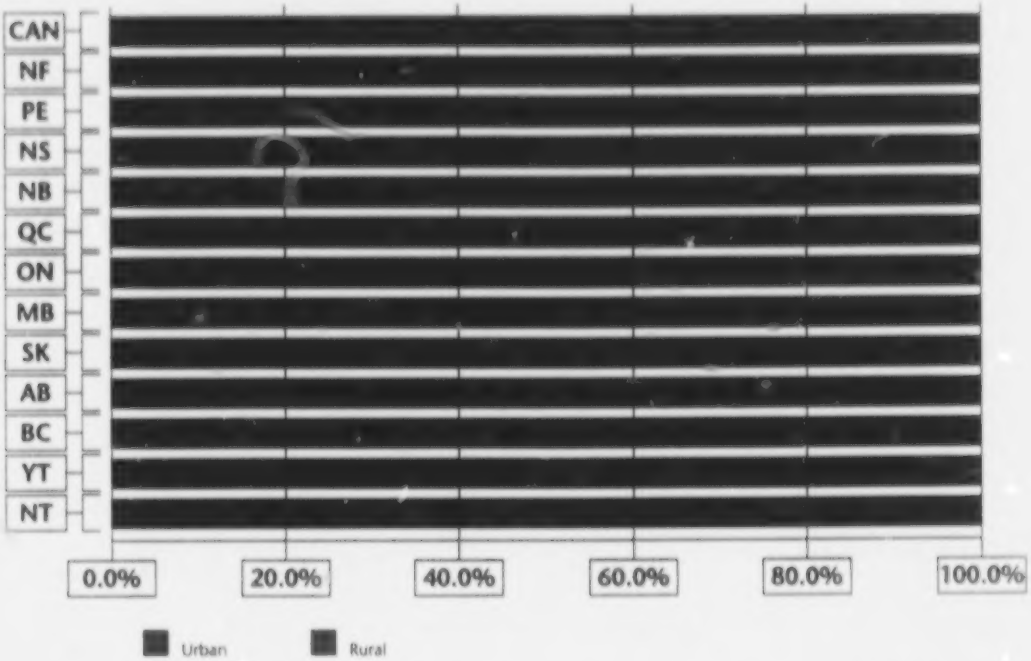
In the last quarter of the twentieth century, the urban/rural split in the provinces' populations altered unevenly. Urban populations rose in Prince Edward Island from 38% to 44%, British Columbia from 76% to 82%, Alberta from 74% to 80% and in Saskatchewan from 53% to 63%. On the other hand, the proportion of urban dwellers decreased in Nova Scotia from 57% to 55%, New Brunswick from 59% to 57%, and Quebec from 81% to 78%.

And so what?

In 1900, more than six out of ten Canadians were rural dwellers, and 45% of Canadians were employed in some kind of farming. A hundred years later, no more than 3% of Canadians live on farms and are employed in agriculture.

Urban life exposes families to ethnic and cultural diversity, and job opportunities. Cities are attractive to young people and new Canadians as well as those for whom the remoteness of rural life offers few economic prospects. Two-thirds of all Canadians contribute to their families by working at urban jobs, most of them in the service sector.

7. Percentage Distribution of the Population by Urban and Rural Area (1996)



Source: Statistics Canada's 1996 Census, Urban and Rural Population Counts, for Provinces and Territories, 1996, Cat. #93-357-XPB

7a. Percentage Distribution of Urban Population by Province (1851 - 1996)

	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
1851	13%			8%	14%	15%	14%						
1861	14		9	8	13	17	19						
1871	18		9	8	18	20	21				9		
1881	23		11	15	18	24	27	15			18		
1891	30		13	19	20	29	35	24			43		
1901	35		15	28	23	36	40	25	6	16	46		
1911	42		16	37	27	45	50	39	16	29	51		
1921	47		19	45	35	52	59	42	17	31	51		
1931	53		20	47	35	59	63	45	20	32	62		
1941	56		22	52	39	61	68	46	21	32	64		
1951	62	43	25	55	43	67	73	56	30	48	69		
1961	70	51	32	54	47	74	77	64	43	61	73		
1971	76	57	38	57	57	81	82	70	53	74	76		
1981	76	59	37	55	51	78	82	71	58	77	78		
1986	76	59	38	54	50	78	82	62	61	79	79		
1996	78	57	44	55	49	78	83	72	63	80	82	60	43

Source: Historical Data - Statistics Canada's Canadian Social Trends, Winter 1987 and 1996 Census Cat #93-357-XPB

8. Canadians on the move

Between 1991 and 1996, nearly half of all Canadian residents moved to a different location. Of these, a little more than half simply moved to a new location within their municipality. A further one third moved within their province; and 8% were Canadians returning from outside of Canada such as diplomats, professionals and business people with international interests.

Among the remaining 8% who moved to another province, many were young people, heading west. British Columbia was the most popular destination: between 1991 and 1996, 150,000 more people entered the province than moved out. Alberta, Yukon and Prince Edward Island also saw more people settle than depart. Between 1991 and 1996, 47,000 more people left Ontario than settled there, but as the millennium approached, the province appeared to be regaining its attraction.

And so what?

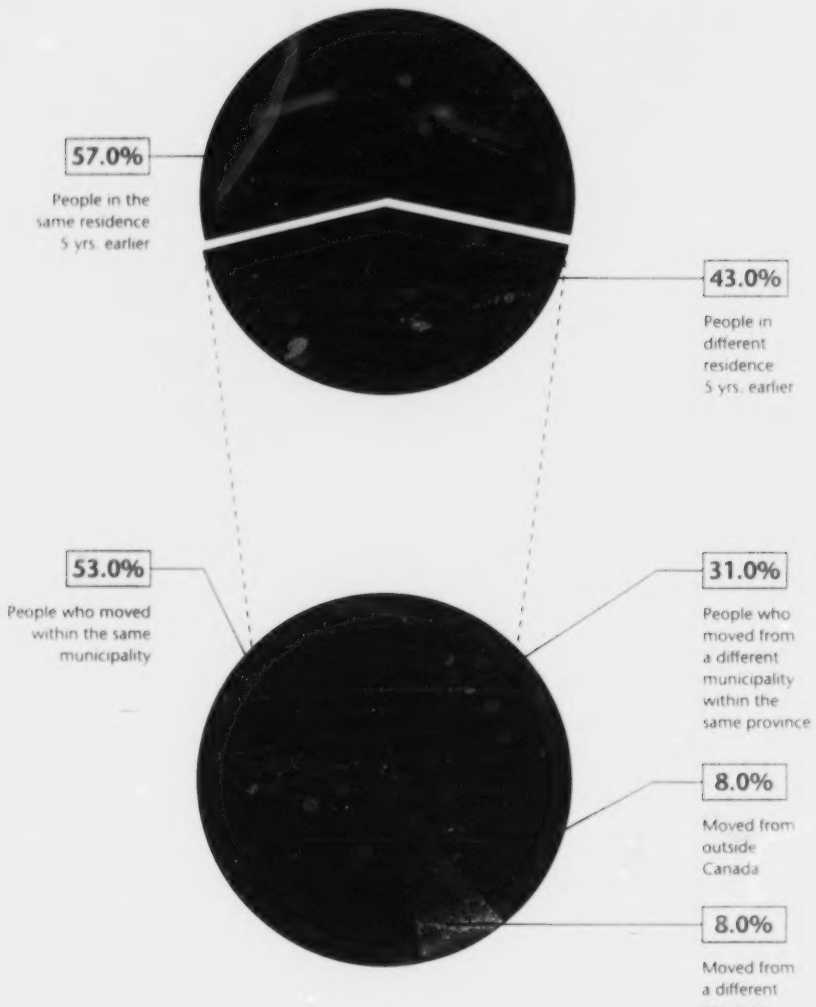
As might be expected, young people move more than older Canadians do. University graduates make up a quarter of those on the move. The more education a person has, the more likely he or she is to move, usually to find work in a province or country that appears to offer more economic opportunity. Each year between 1990 and 1996, approximately 8,500 people with university degrees moved from Canada to the United States. During the same period, almost 33,000 university educated people moved to Canada each year.[1]

In general, Canadians became somewhat less mobile as the twentieth century drew to a close (47% moving between 1986 and 1991 compared with 43% after 1992.) Possibly this is because many double-income families find it difficult to move, and because the baby boomers have reached middle age – a time when most people are established in their homes and jobs.

Picking up stakes can cause significant stress on families as they join new communities, create new friendships, find new schools for the children, search for new employment for a relocated spouse, or handle a long-distance relationship with an elderly parent. Many young families experience difficulty getting new jobs when they are unable to call on their parents or grandparents for informal childcare.

[1] C.C.P.A. *Monitor*, 1999. "Canada's 'brain gain' 400% larger than the 'brain drain'" Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Vol.5, #9, March.

8. Geographical Mobility (1996)


57.0%
People in the same residence 5 yrs. earlier
43.0%
People in different residence 5 yrs. earlier
53.0%
People who moved within the same municipality
31.0%
People who moved from a different municipality within the same province
8.0%
Moved from outside Canada
8.0%
Moved from a different province

Source: Statistics Canada, Nation Series CD-ROM, Cat. No. 93F0020XCB96004

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9. Living together or living alone?

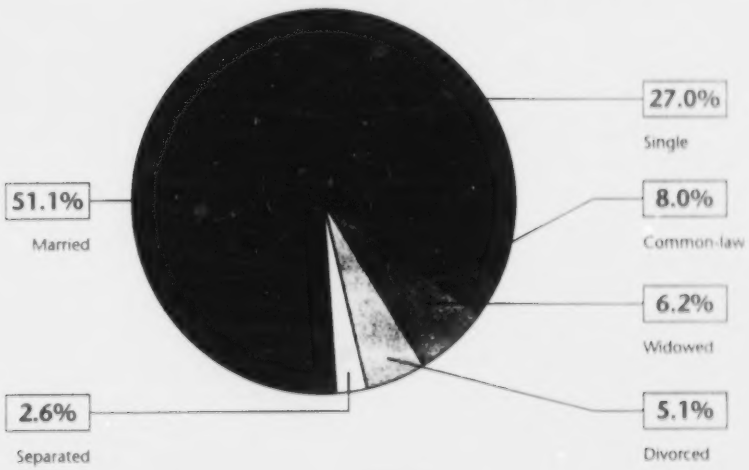
Half of all Canadians over the age of 15 were married at the time of the 1996 census, just over a quarter were single and had never been married, and almost one in ten lived common law. Widows and widowers made up 6% of the adult population; divorced and separated people made up 5% and 3% respectively.

In the last decade of the twentieth century, the number of Canadian couples decreased by 2%. Fewer couples were married but more were living common law.

The proportion of people who were married varied from a low of 40% in the Northwest Territories, 43% in Yukon and 44% in Quebec, to a high of 56% in Newfoundland. Common-law relationships were most frequent in the Northwest Territories (19%), Yukon (16%) and Quebec (14%). The other provinces ranged between 6% and 8%.

People were the least likely to be separated or divorced in Newfoundland (4% or half the national average), and most likely in Yukon (10%). The other provinces varied from five to nine percent. In the Northwest Territories people were the most likely to be single (33% against the 27% national average); most likely to live common law (19% against 8%); least likely to be married (40% against 51%); and least likely to be widowed (3% against 6%).

9. Marital Status of Canadians Aged 15 and Over (1996)



Sources: Population by Five-Year Age Groups (19) and Sex (3), Showing Marital Status (6), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1991 and 1996 Censuses (100% Data) (93F22005.ivt) and Population 15 Years and Over Living in Common-Law Unions by Age Groups (12) and Sex (3), Showing Legal Marital Status (5), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1991 and 1996 Censuses (100% Data) (93F22006.ivt)

Marital Status of Canadians Aged 15 and Over by Province (1996)

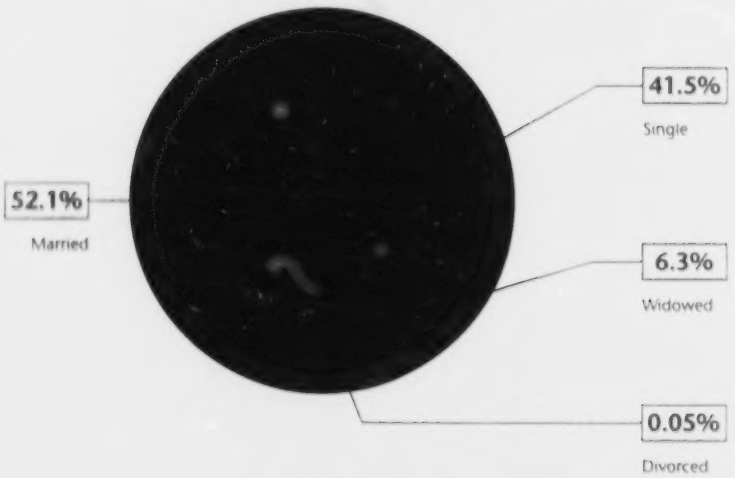
	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
Never married (single)	27.0%	28.0%	27.7%	26.5%	26.3%	28.4%	26.5%	27.0%	26.3%	26.3%	26.4%	28.7%	33.3%
Married (including common-law)	59.1	61.6	59.1	59.2	60.4	57.5	59.6	58.8	60.0	60.8	59.0	59.0	58.5
Total common-law	8.0	5.9	5.3	6.6	7.5	13.9	5.3	5.8	5.8	6.9	6.9	15.8	18.7
Total married (without common-law)	51.2	55.7	53.8	52.6	52.8	43.7	54.3	53.1	54.3	54.0	52.1	43.2	39.8
Separated	2.6	1.6	2.7	2.6	2.8	2.0	2.9	2.5	2.2	2.4	2.9	3.6	2.4
Divorced	5.1	2.8	3.6	4.7	3.9	5.8	4.7	4.5	4.1	5.4	5.9	6.0	2.9
Widowed	6.2	6.1	7.0	7.1	6.7	6.2	6.3	7.2	7.4	5.1	5.8	2.7	2.8

Sources: Population by Five-Year Age Groups (19) and Sex (3), Showing Marital Status (6), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1991 and 1996 Censuses (100% Data) (93F2200S.ivt) and Population 15 Years and Over Living in Common-Law Unions by Age Groups (12) and Sex (3), Showing Legal Marital Status (5), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1991 and 1996 Censuses (100% Data) (93F22006.ivt)

And so what?

There are some striking similarities between the marital status of Canadians at the beginning of the century and at century end. About the same proportion of Canadians were married: 52% and 51% respectively. As well, about 6% of the population were widowed in both 1901 and 1996. There are also significant differences. Because the population was much younger a century ago, close to 42% were single in 1901 compared to only 27% in 1996. And at century end, 8% of Canadians were living common law, 5% were divorced and 3% were separated.

9a. Marital Status of Canadians aged 15 and over (1901)



Source: Canadian Families Project, Profiling Canada's Families in 1901, University of Victoria, 1999

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10. A quarter century of changing families

In the last quarter of the twentieth century, Canada's population increased by a third from nearly 22 million to approaching 29 million, while the number of families increased by 55%. At the same time, some types of family increased more than others.

Families with children increased by 45% from 3.5 to 5.1 million. But, as a *proportion* of all families, those with children decreased from 70% to 65% of all families.

Two-parent families increased from 3 to 4 million but the *proportion* of families with children that have two parents decreased from 87% in 1971 to 78% in 1996

In the same period, the number of families without children grew from 1.5 to 2.7 million and the *proportion* of all families without children also increased from 30% to 35%.

The number of lone-parent families increased more dramatically: from less than half a million (480,000) to more than 1.1 million. The *proportion* of lone-parent families grew from 14% of all families with children to 22%.

As the century drew to a close, it was also evident that among Canada's families, there was an unknown number of same-sex couples, some of whom were raising children.

And so what?

An aging society is one factor that accounts for the increasing number and proportion of families without children. As life expectancy increases, married couples have more of their lives to spend together as "empty-nesters" after their children have grown up and left home.

Sometimes, those empty-nesters are surprised when their "boomerang kids" return home between jobs, to continue their studies or simply save on rent. In fact, a large number of young men and women still live at home with their parents. Seven out of ten men aged 20 to 24 and more than six out of ten women of the same age lived with their parents in 1991. Almost four out of every ten 25-29 year olds, men and women, were still at home.

Other factors contributing to the number and proportion of families without children include couples who are delaying having children, or who are childless – either intentionally or unintentionally.

10. Changing Family Types (1971-1996)

Change in the number of families by family type, Canada

No. of families by type	1971	1996	change in number	% increase 1971-1996
all families	5,053,165	7,837,865	2,784,700	55%
families without children	1,527,955	2,729,775	1,201,820	79
families with children	3,525,210	5,108,085	1,582,875	45
two-parent families	3,047,685	3,970,580	922,895	30
lone-parent families	477,525	1,137,505	659,980	138

Percentage increase in number of families by family type, Provincial (1971-1996)

	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT & NT
all families	44%	48%	41%	48%	44%	56%	25%	21%	89%	90%	119%
families without children	76	55	66	76	78	69	35	38	130	120	184
families with children	34	46	31	37	31	50	20	13	72	74	37
two-parent families	24	35	17	25	16	35	9	2	58	57	82
lone-parent families	112	111	108	113	124	151	82	88	171	178	238

Source: Statistics Canada Families, Number Type and Structure, Cat. #93-312, Statistics Canada, Census of Canada 1971 Vol. 2 Part 2, Families.

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11. Small is beautiful?

At the end of the twentieth century, the average size of families was much smaller than at the beginning of the century. In 1901, 4.5 people made up the average family, and 5 people lived in the average household (not necessarily family members).* By 1971, the average size of families had dropped to 3.7, and by 1986 to 3.1. Thereafter, it remained constant.

Two-person families grew fastest in both number and proportion, particularly during the 80s. In 1996, two-person families (comprised of a married or common-law couple or a lone parent and one child) accounted for more than four of every ten families (3.4 million families). In 1971, only three out of ten families were made up of two people (1.6 million families).

At the end of the century, provincial and territorial differences in the proportion of two-person families ranged from 47% of all families in British Columbia to a low of 30% of all families in the Northwest Territories.

Both the number and proportion of large families declined dramatically during the last quarter of the twentieth century. Families of six or more people fell from 14% of all families in 1971 to 3% in 1996. In the 60s, nearly three out of ten families had five or more members, but at the turn of the millennium, the proportion was down to one in ten. The decrease in family size was greatest in Newfoundland, New Brunswick and Quebec.

And so what?

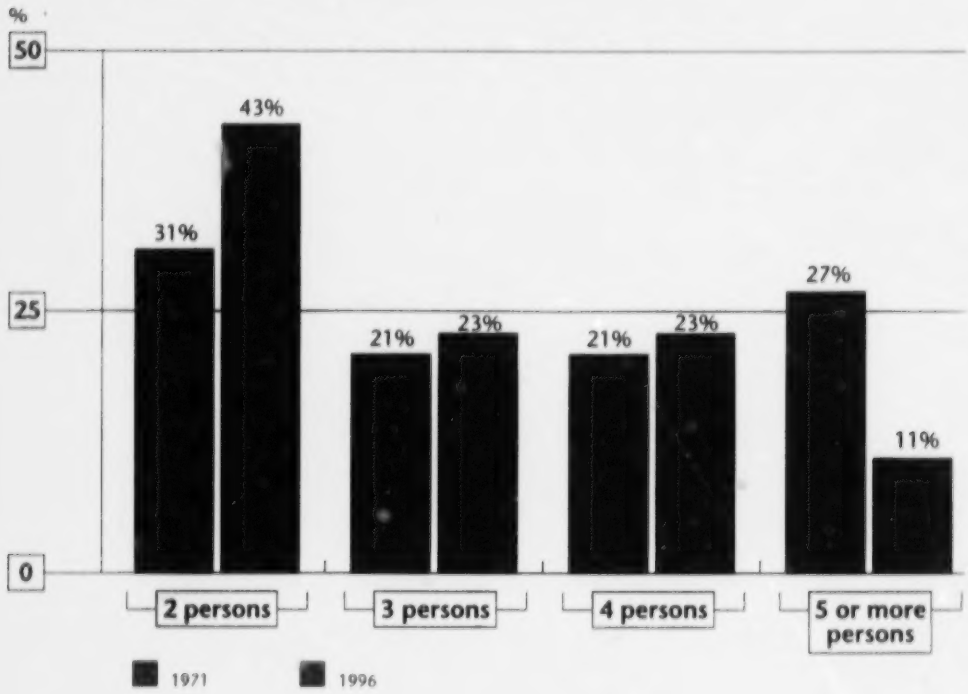
The growing number and proportion of two-person families is explained by an increase in three different kinds of families: lone parents with one child, couples whose children have grown up and left home, and couples without children.

Many of the experiences that older generations had growing up in large families with many brothers and sisters seem like fanciful stories from another era to today's generation of young parents and their children.

Several interrelated factors have contributed to changes in family size. The availability of effective methods of contraception has enabled some women and men to plan the size of their families. Marriages and first pregnancies occur later in life. And personal decisions and economic forces combine to encourage most women to participate in the paid labour force during their child-bearing years.

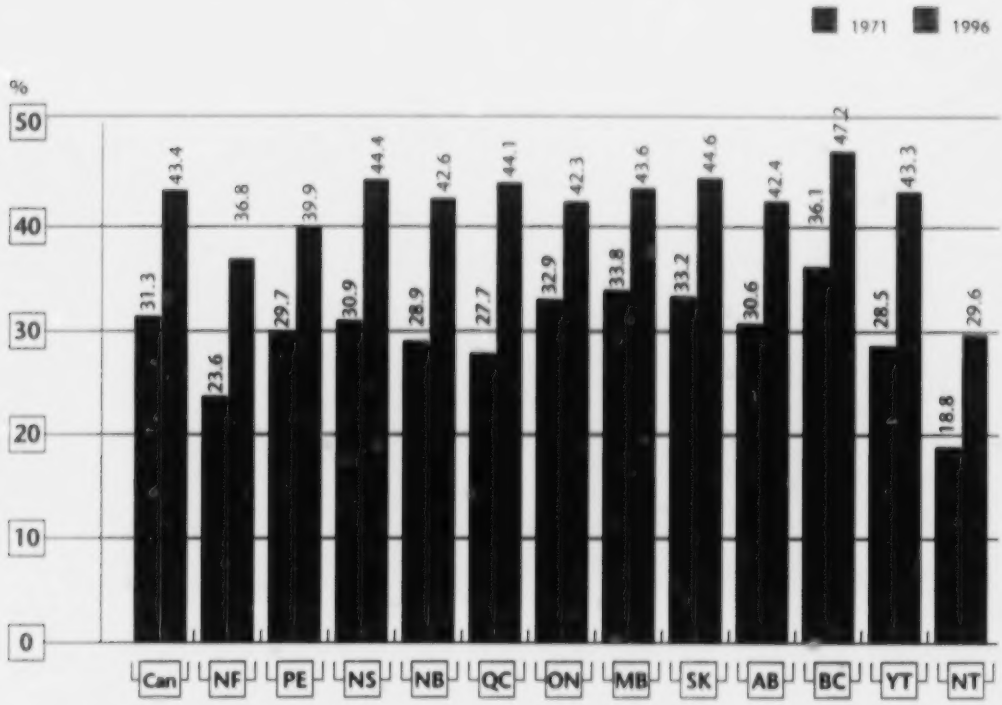
* See **Technical Notes** on *Canadian Families Project*

11. Distribution of Families by Number of Persons in the Family (1971 and 1996)



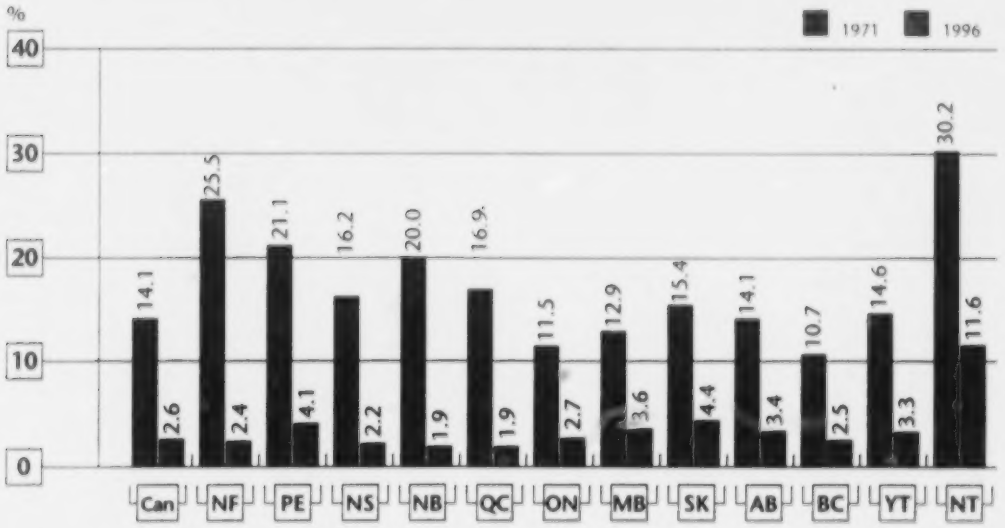
Source: Statistics Canada, The Nation Series, CD-ROM, Cat. No. 93F0020XCB96004.

11a. Percentage of Families (2 Persons), Canada, Provinces and Territories (1971 and 1996)



Source: Census Families in Private Households by Number of Persons (11) for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1971-1996 Censuses (20% Sample Data) (93F220007.ivt).

11b. Percentage of Families (6+ Persons), Canada, Provinces and Territories (1971 and 1996)



Source: Census Families in Private Households by Number of Persons (11) for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1971-1996 Censuses (20% Sample Data) (93F220007.ivt).

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Most people aged over 65 are not in the workforce. For many, their quality of life after retirement is determined by the strength of their family relationships. There are two reasons for this—older people tend to have more time to devote to family, and people may need extra support with activities of daily life as they age.

Andrew Tongue and Nicola Ballenden (1998).
"Families and Ageing in the 21st Century", *Family Matters*. Vol.52, 4

12. Is the extended family extinct?

Extended families living in the same household were rare in Canada at the turn of the century. Only 2.7% of all households or 208,000 family homes had three generations living under one roof. Although they are uncommon, the number of three-generation households increased by nearly 40% in the last fifteen years of the century. Today, just over three-quarters of a million Canadians live in a three-generation household.

Of course, many Canadians would include their parents, siblings and grandparents as family members even if they do not live in the same household. The caring, emotional and financial support do not necessarily stop at the front door, but can reach extended family members living down the street, on the other side of the city or across the country. In fact, most Canadian children had grandparents and saw them regularly. Approximately nine out of ten 10 year olds have at least one living grandparent. Ninety percent of older Canadians (age 65 plus), who themselves had raised children, had at least one grandchild.

And so what?

At the beginning of this century, a little more than 6% of all families could be characterized as extended family households in which spouses, parents, children, grandparents, aunts or uncles lived together. The proportion of non-elderly families having at least one member aged 65 or older was 6%.*

An increasing number of adult Canadians have children of their own, plus at least one living parent. Affection enriches the lives of all three generations, and grandparents often provide much support to both their children and grandchildren. At the same time, care of a frail elderly parent can increase the responsibilities of the generation "sandwiched" in the middle.

*See **Technical Notes** on *Canadian Families Project*.

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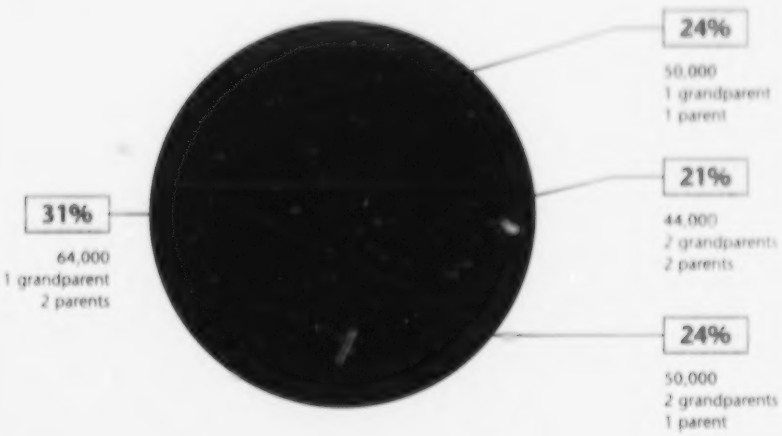
12. 208,000 three-generation households (1995)



Note: Third generation always present.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Social Trends, Summer 1999.

Number and Proportion of People in a Three Generation Family Household[1] (1995)

Region		
Atlantic	77,400	4.0%
Quebec	99,300	1.7%
Ontario	383,300	4.4%
Prairies	83,800	2.2%
BC	125,200	4.2%
Canada	769,000	3.3%

[1] Persons aged 15 and over

Source: Statistics Canada's General Social Survey, cycle 10, 1995 microdata.

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13. Canada's families at century's end

There were 7.8 million families in Canada, according to the Statistics Canada definition of a "census family."* At the time of the 1996 census, 45 out of every hundred families were married couples with children. This represented a decline from 1991, when the number was 52 out of every hundred.

Couples *without* children accounted for 35% of all families. This group, which remained a steady proportion over the last decade of the twentieth century, included both the parents of children who have grown up and left home, as well as couples who have not had children.

Looking at the different kinds of families over time in terms of each group's *proportion* of all families, families with children living at home made up 65% of all families. This was a reduction of 5% over the last quarter of the century. The proportion of these families with children with *two parents* decreased from 87% to 78%. At the same time, the proportion of *lone-parent* families increased from 14% of all families raising children to 22%. Common-law couples with children accounted for an increasing proportion of all families, rising to 6% in 1996.

Looking at Canada's 7.8 million census families again, *without* reference to whether the adults were married, common-law or were lone parents, 5.1 million families or 65% had never-married children living at home. Significantly, this percentage has not changed since 1991.

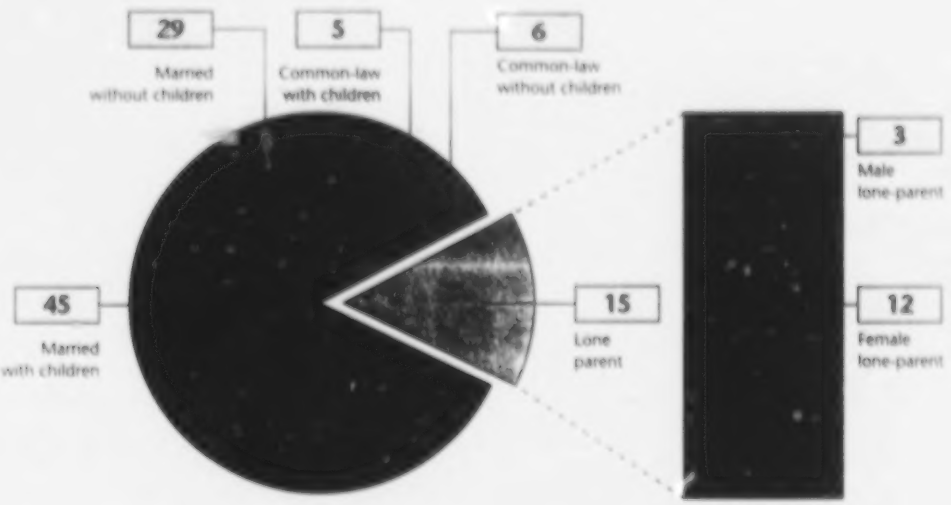
And so what?

In 1901, about seven out of ten families were composed of a married couple with children. Close to 14% of families at the beginning of the century were led by lone parents, eight out of ten of whom were widows or widowers. As such, lone-parent families were almost as common in 1901 as they were at the end of the century. The main difference is that in 1901 more were caused by the death of one of the parents. Then, the majority of lone parents were widowed, but there were also significant numbers of married men and women living apart from their spouses. In both 1901 and 1996, most lone-parent families were headed by women. In 1901, 45% of lone-parent families included "children" aged 20 and over.**

The proportion of people living in families declined somewhat over the 90s. Partly, this was because people chose to wait longer before living together or getting married. There was also a larger proportion of separated, divorced or widowed people no longer living as part of a census family.

*See **Technical Notes** for definition of "census family"
See **Technical Notes on Canadian Families Project

13. "Out of 100 Families" (Family Types) (1996)



Percentage of families, by type, by province (1996)

	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
Married couples with children	45.1%	53.6%	50.3%	45.4%	46.8%	39.4%	48.3%	46.2%	44.9%	47.5%	43.0%	38.5%	43.3%
Married couples without children	28.6	24.6	27.5	29.4	28.1	24.2	29.5	31.1	33.2	29.6	32.9	22.1	12.5
Common-law couples with children	5.5	4.6	3.7	4.1	5.3	10.7	3.3	4.2	4.4	4.4	3.9	11.2	18.3
Common-law couples without children	6.2	4.0	3.9	5.5	5.5	9.8	4.5	4.4	4.1	4.1	5.6	11.6	8.8
Lone parents with children	14.5	13.2	14.5	15.6	14.2	15.9	14.4	14.1	13.4	12.9	13.8	16.5	17.1
male lone-parents	16.9	15.8	16.4	15.2	16.4	18.4	15.8	16.5	16.1	17.9	17.2	16.9	23.0
female lone-parents	83.1	84.2	83.6	84.8	83.6	81.6	84.2	83.5	83.9	82.1	82.8	83.1	77.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Number of families, by type (1996)

Married couples with children	3,535,630	83,525	18,045	115,315	97,040	767,855	1,417,240	135,325	116,925	340,665	434,110	3,105	6,475
Married couples without children	2,244,085	38,335	9,865	74,720	58,275	472,410	865,870	91,020	86,370	212,100	331,455	1,795	1,875
Common-law couples with children	434,950	7,105	1,345	10,295	11,025	209,225	97,050	12,330	11,500	31,855	39,575	900	2,740
Common-law couples without children	485,690	6,305	1,415	13,945	11,460	191,035	130,860	13,000	10,665	40,465	64,290	935	1,310
Lone parents with children	1,137,505	20,485	5,200	39,680	29,435	309,440	421,705	41,265	34,930	92,480	139,010	1,330	2,560
male lone-parents	192,275	3,245	855	6,040	4,835	56,920	66,670	6,805	5,640	16,550	23,900	225	590
female lone-parents	945,230	17,240	4,345	33,640	24,600	252,515	355,035	34,455	29,290	75,930	115,110	1,105	1,980
Total	7,837,860	155,755	35,870	253,955	207,235	1,949,965	2,932,725	292,935	260,390	717,565	1,008,440	8,065	14,960

Source: Statistics Canada 1996 Census, Census Families in Private Households by Age Groups of Never-married Sons and/or Daughters at Home (15), Showing Family Structure (7), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1996 Census (20% Sample Data) (91F22009.ivt).

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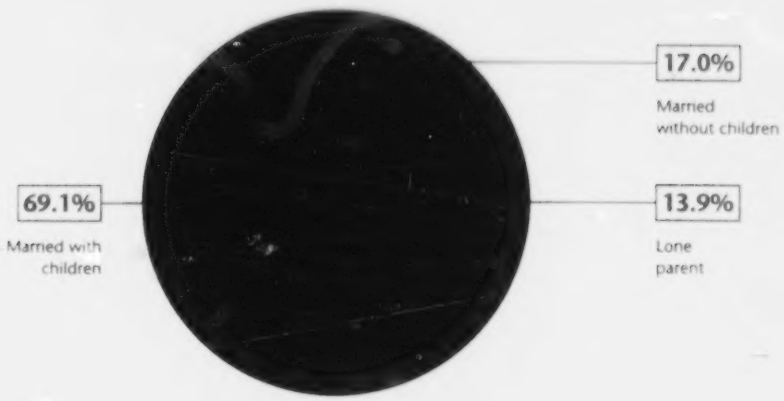
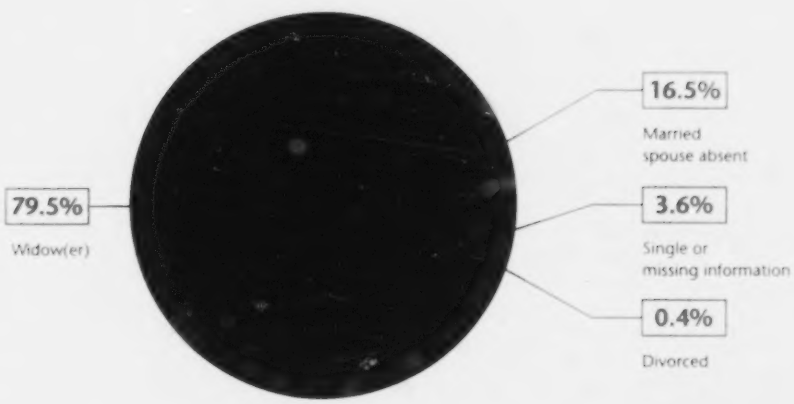
13a. Family Types (1901)



Lone Parents (1901)



Source: Canadian Families Project, Profiling Canada's Families in 1901, University of Victoria, 1999.

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With the majority of wives now working in the paid labour force, family members reconverge on the family home carrying with them the frenzied pace of their individual routines. Of course, it doesn't stop there. Although it is nice to think of the home as the safe haven where calm can be restored, it is typically the place where other demands and negotiations for time are presented. Housework, homework, classes, games, caregiving responsibilities, and meetings result in a new form of family work: the strategic organization of many schedules to keep pace with the accelerating culture.

Kerry J. Daly (1996). *Families & Time: Keeping Pace in a Hurried Culture*. Sage Publications, Inc.: 42

14. Are there children at home?

At the end of the millennium, 5.1 million or 65% of the 7.8 million families in Canada had never-married children at home. Across Canada, these figures varied from 61% to 79%. The lowest proportion was in British Columbia at 61%, followed by Saskatchewan at 63%. In the Northwest Territories 79% of all families had children, and in Newfoundland, 71%.

Of the 5.1 million families with children, 78% had two parents, and the remaining 22% were lone-parent families.

The variation in the proportion of lone-parent families was moderately consistent across Canada. It varied from a high in Yukon of 25% and Nova Scotia at 24% to a low in Newfoundland of 18%.

The 2.7 million families without children living at home accounted for 35% of all Canadian families. Across Canada, British Columbia was the highest at 39%, followed by Saskatchewan at 37%. The lowest proportion was in the Northwest Territories at 21%, followed by Newfoundland at 29%.

The *proportion* of all families composed of married couples with children was lower in Quebec (39%) than in Ontario (48%) and British Columbia (43%). However, Quebec had a higher proportion of families composed of common-law couples with children (11% as compared to Ontario's 3%). One half of families in Quebec were couples with children - comparable to Ontario at 52% and British Columbia at 47%.

And so what?

As people grow from child to adult to senior, they may live in several different types of family. Statistics about families are, therefore, like snapshots of moving targets, influenced by other demographic forces such as birth, death, marriage, divorce and remarriage. Regional differences among family types are also the product of forces as varied as geography and climate. The proportion of family types differs from coast to coast to coast with younger families often moving to where the jobs can be found and older families often retiring to where the sun shines.

14. How Families Look in Different Provinces and Territories (1996)

	Total Number of Families	Total Families without Children*		Total Families with Children*			
		Number	%	Number	% of All	% Two-Parent	% Lone-Parent
Can	7,837,865	2,729,775	34.8%	5,108,090	65.2%	78%	22%
NF	155,750	44,640	28.7	111,115	71.3	82	18
PE	35,875	11,280	31.4	24,595	68.6	79	21
NS	253,960	88,670	34.9	165,290	65.1	76	24
NB	207,235	69,735	33.7	137,495	66.3	79	21
QC	1,949,975	663,450	34.0	1,286,520	66.0	76	24
ON	2,932,725	996,725	34.0	1,935,995	66.0	78	22
MB	292,930	104,015	35.5	188,910	64.5	78	22
SK	260,385	97,030	37.3	163,355	62.7	79	21
AB	717,560	252,565	35.2	464,995	64.8	80	20
BC	1,008,440	395,740	39.2	612,695	60.8	77	23
YT	8,070	2,730	33.8	5,340	66.2	75	25
NT	14,955	3,180	21.3	11,775	78.7	78	22

*Never-married children of any age living at home.

Source: Statistics Canada 1996 Census, Census Families in Private Households by Age Groups of Never-married Sons and/or Daughters at Home (15), Showing Family Structure (7), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1996 Census (20% Sample Data) (93F22009.ivt).

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15. Canada's couples – married or living together?

At the end of the twentieth century, there were 6.8 million couples or "conjugal unions" in Canada, which is to say, 13.6 million people were married or living together. In fact the number of conjugal unions was somewhat higher, given the unknown number of same-sex couples. Almost nine out of ten couples were married but an increasing number of people were living common law. In the last decade of the twentieth century, the number of legally married people increased by less than 1%. Over the same period, the number of people in a common-law union increased by 26%.

Among the provinces, Quebec had the highest proportion of couples living common law at 24%. Prince Edward Island and Ontario had the lowest numbers at 9% of all couples. Young adults accounted for the greatest increase in the number and proportion of common-law unions. One in five persons aged 20 to 24 were members of a couple, but more than half of them (56%) were living common law.

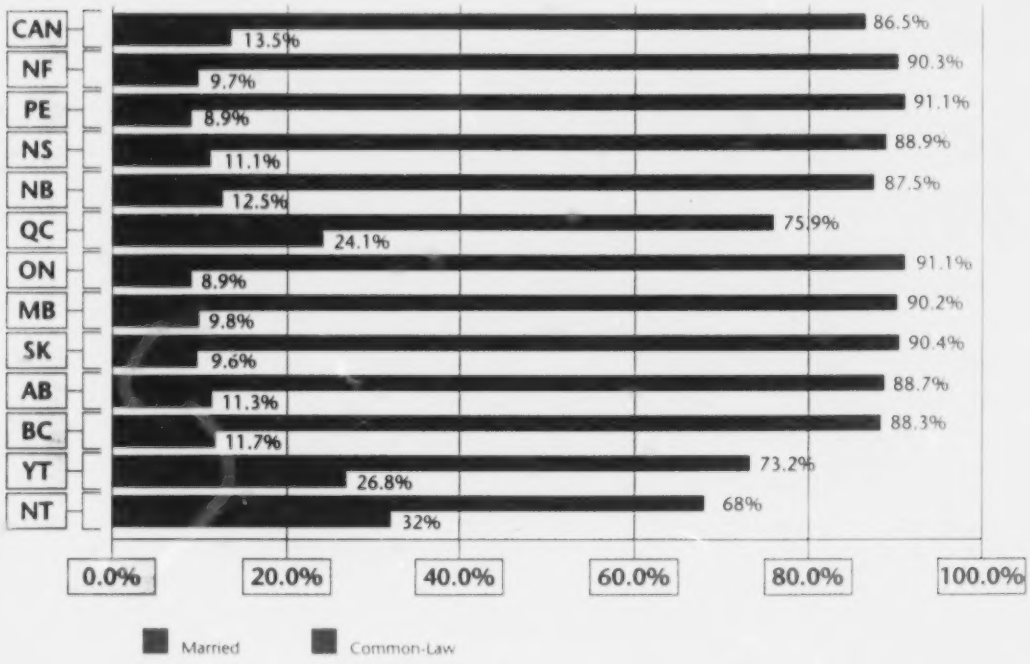
Older groups of Canadians were more likely to be living as couples, but less frequently within a common-law relationship. Seven out of ten people between the ages of 30 and 34 were part of a couple, of which one in five were living common law.

Senior couples, as might be expected, were more likely to be married. However, perhaps surprisingly, there were more seniors than teenagers living common law.

And so what?

Some still enter into common-law relationships as a prelude to legal marriage or remarriage. However, common-law relationships have become, for many, an alternative to legal marriage.

15. Marriage and Common-Law Unions as Percentage of All Conjugal Unions (1996)



Percentage Change in Number of Conjugal Unions, 1991 to 1996

	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
Total conjugal unions	3.3%	0.3%	2.7%	-0.3%	2.1%	0.4%	3.8%	-0.1%	-2.1%	5.2%	9.9%	8.5%	14.3%
Common-law	26.0	32.0	36.6	19.2	40.9	30.1	23.6	17.9	23.8	19.5	20.2	30.7	43.6
Married	0.4	-2.2	0.2	-2.2	-1.8	-6.4	2.3	-1.7	-4.2	3.7	8.7	2.1	4.3

Source: Population by Five-Year Age Groups (19) and Sex (3), Showing Marital Status (6), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1991 and 1996 Censuses (100% Data) (93F22005.ivt.) and Population 15 Years and Over Living in Common-Law Unions by Age Groups (12) and Sex (3), Showing Legal Marital Status (5), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1991 and 1996 Censuses (100% Data) (93F22006.ivt).

15a. Number and Proportion of Persons in a Conjugal Union, by Marital Status and Age (1996)

[redacted]	Number in conjugal union		% of Population in	Of those in a union...
	Legally married	Common-law	conjugal union	% common-law
15-19	9,815	32,225	2%	77%
20-24	178,725	224,690	21	56
25-29	724,230	343,210	53	32
30-34	1,348,065	347,015	69	20
35-39	1,595,855	285,655	74	15
40-44	1,548,805	207,620	76	12
45-49	1,460,135	152,495	77	9
50-54	1,155,510	98,625	78	8
55-59	948,710	57,335	77	6
60-64	852,200	35,625	75	4
65 and over	1,916,665	44,275	56	2
Total 15 and over	11,738,715	1,828,770	59	13

Source: Population by Five-Year Age Groups (19) and Sex (3), Showing Marital Status (6), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1991 and 1996 Censuses (100% Data) (93F22005.ivt.) and Population 15 Years and Over Living in Common-Law Unions by Age Groups (12) and Sex (3), Showing Legal Marital Status (5), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1991 and 1996 Censuses (100% Data) (93F22006.ivt).

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Families teach the first lessons of relationship among persons, some of which are essential not only to private life but to public life as well. Within the family one learns to act upon others and to be acted upon. It is in the family that we learn to identify ourselves with others or fail to learn to love. It is in the family that we learn to trust others as we depend on them or learn to distrust them. We learn to hold ourselves accountable. These lessons of reciprocity, trust, discipline and self-restraint are important to forming relationships in public life.

Ernesto Cortes Jr. (1996) Cited by Jean Bethke Elshtain in "*Marriage in Civil Society*" in *Family Affairs*, vol.7, no. 1-2, 3.

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16. Tying the knot

In 1997, there were 159,350 marriages in Canada. As these couples stood to take their vows, about one in four brides and grooms had been to the altar before.

Marriage rates (marriages per 1,000 people in the population) are decreasing, and common-law unions are on the increase in Canada.

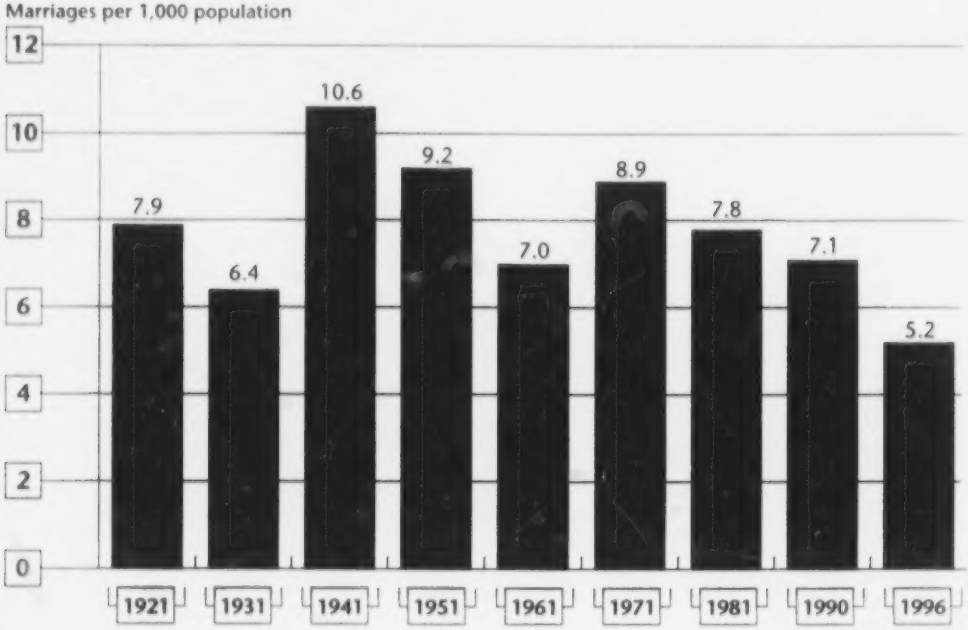
During the Second World War, marriage reached its peak of popularity. In 1942, and again in 1946, there were 10.9 marriages per 1,000 population. Then the marriage rate declined until the 1970s, when the baby-boomers reached marriage age, and then still further to an unprecedented low of 5.2 at the end of the century. The previous low in marriage rates was recorded in 1932 during the Great Depression.

Until the 90s, the rate of first marriage was falling because more people were living together prior to or instead of getting married. At the same time, the rate of *remarriage* was increasing with one of every six marriages in the early 1970s involving at least one spouse who had been married before. In the 90s, however, both marriage and remarriage rates fell for younger couples as well as older divorced people.

And so what?

Earlier in the twentieth century, only marriage allowed couples to live together with respectability in the eyes of the larger community. By the end of the century, common-law relationships have gained a greater degree of acceptance among Canadians, and most of those who marry will do so after having lived together.

16. Marriage Rates (1921-1996)



Source: Statistics Canada, Selected Marriage Statistics 1921-1990. Cat. 82-552 and Statistics Canada, The Daily, January 29, 1998.

Number of Marriages (1997)

	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
Marriages	159,350	3,235	960	5,525	4,340	28,875	67,540	6,620	5,700	17,860	23,245	240	210

Sources: Marriages, Statistics Canada, CANSIM, http://www.statcan.ca/english/Pgdb/People/Families/famil04.htm; divorces, Statistics Canada, The Daily, 18/05/99.

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17. Married life through the ages

As people go through the ages and stages of life, they may live in several different types of family at different times.

At the end of the millennium, the largest *proportion* of people between 15 and 24 were single (88%). Only 7% lived common law, and only 5% were married.

Fifteen percent of people between 25 and 34 were common-law couples. Thirty three percent of this age group were single, 46% married, and 6% separated or divorced.

Among the age group between 35 and 44, 65% were married and 11% were separated or divorced. Fourteen percent of them were single, 10% were living common law, and 1% were widowed.

Fourteen percent of people between 45 to 54 were separated or divorced. Eight percent of them were single, 7% lived common law, 70% were married, 2% were widowed.

Seventy-two percent of people between 55 to 64 were married. Six percent of this group were single, 4% lived common law, and 11% were separated or divorced and 7% were widowed.

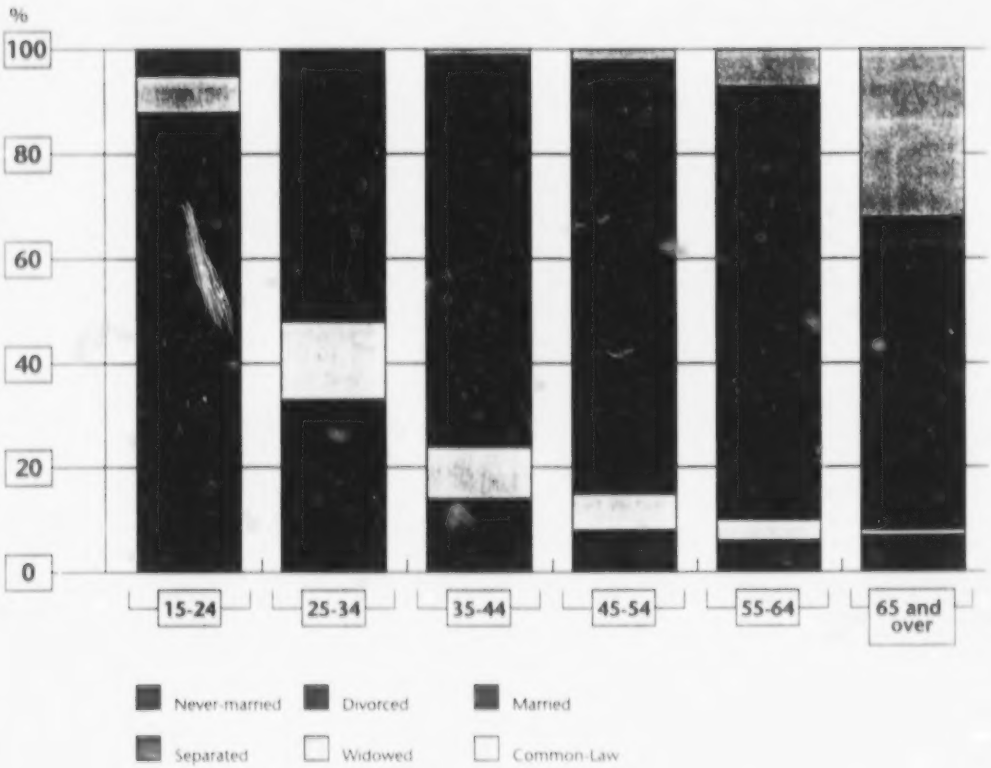
Thirty-two percent of older people (over 65) were widowed. Because men have shorter life spans and are usually older than their wives, there are more widows than widowers. Seven percent of seniors were single, 1% lived common law, 54% were married, 6% were separated or divorced.

And so what?

People experience various types of family over the course of their lives. The proportions of each age group that are single, married, widowed, separated or divorced changed significantly over the course of the twentieth century. For example, in 1901, 60% of 25-34 year-olds were married compared to 46% at the start of the new millennium. While 10% of 45-54 year-olds were divorced in 1996, well under 1% of this age group was divorced back in 1901*.

*See **Technical Notes** on *Canadian Families Project*

17. Marital Status by Age Group (1996)



Source: Population by Five-Year Age Groups (19) and Sex (3), Showing Marital Status (6), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1991 and 1996 Censuses (100% data) (93F22005.ivt) and Population 15 Years and Over Living in Common-Law Unions by Age Groups (12) and Sex (3), Showing Legal Marital Status (5), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1991 and 1996 Censuses (100% data) (93F22006.ivt).

18. Brides and grooms are older

In the last third of the century, Canadians got married progressively later in life. By 1997, the average age of all brides was 30.9 years. For all grooms the average had risen to 33.5 years of age. Looking only at those brides and grooms marrying for the first time, the average age of brides at first marriage increased from 22 to 28 years, and for grooms from 25 to almost 30 years.

In the case of first marriages, nearly one-quarter of women getting married for the first time were doing so after the age of 30. Later marriages were even more popular for men. A little more than one-third of men married for the first time after their 30th birthday.

According to the 1996 census, women are quite unlikely to marry as teenagers. The rate of first-time marriage for women aged 15 to 19 was 6 per 1,000 population. The teenage marriage rate was highest in the Prairies.

The average age gap between brides and grooms decreased from three years in 1950, to 2.4 years in 1970, and to 1.9 years in 1990.

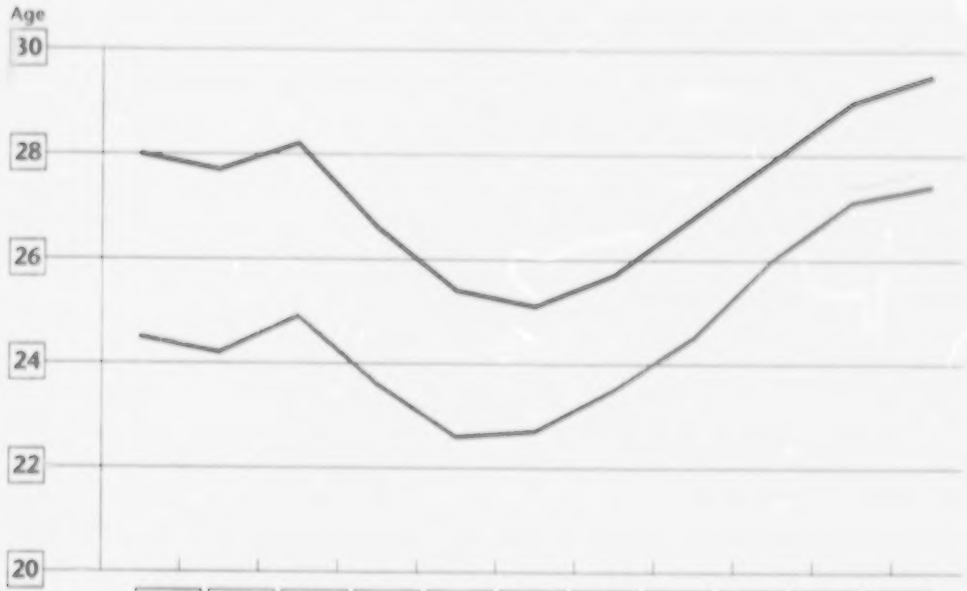
And so what?

In the 1950s, more than four of every ten women were married by the age of twenty-two. By 1996, only about one in ten was married before the age of twenty-five. Marriage was once the only socially acceptable basis for a sexual relationship. Today, the younger a couple is, the more likely they are to live together before or instead of marrying.

With the postponement of marriage until their late twenties or early thirties, Canadians are waiting longer – perhaps taking time to finish their education, pay off their debts, get a job, establish a home - before finding the "right" person and beginning their own family life.

Earlier in the century, brides and grooms were marrying at about the same ages as today. In the 1920s and 1930s, young people found similar uncertainties about their opportunities to establish and sustain a family as do today's young people. It was not until the rapidly increasing affluence of the immediate post-war years that earlier marriage became a possibility. The parents of the baby boom generation married, on average, at a younger age than either their parents or their children.

18. Average Age at First Marriage



	1921	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1985	1990	1995	1997
Males	28	27.7	28.2	26.6	25.4	25.1	25.7	26.8	27.9	29.0	29.5
Females	24.5	24.2	24.9	23.6	22.6	22.7	23.5	24.5	26	27.1	27.4

Source: Statistics Canada (1992). *Current Demographic Analysis. Marriage and Conjugal Life in Canada*, Cat. 91-534; Statistics Canada, The Daily, October 28, 1999 and January 29, 1998

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19. Trial marriage or second union?

At the end of the twentieth century, more couples than ever before were living together without getting married. In 1996, 1.8 million people were living common law. The majority (65%) had never been married. Divorced or separated people made up 32%, of which 26% were divorced and 6% separated but still legally married. Only 3% were widowed.

Among the people living common law, almost all of them under 30 years of age had not been married before, as were the majority of those under 40. Between ages 40 and 64, more than two out of three were divorced or separated. Among seniors 65 and over who were living together, 41% were widowed.

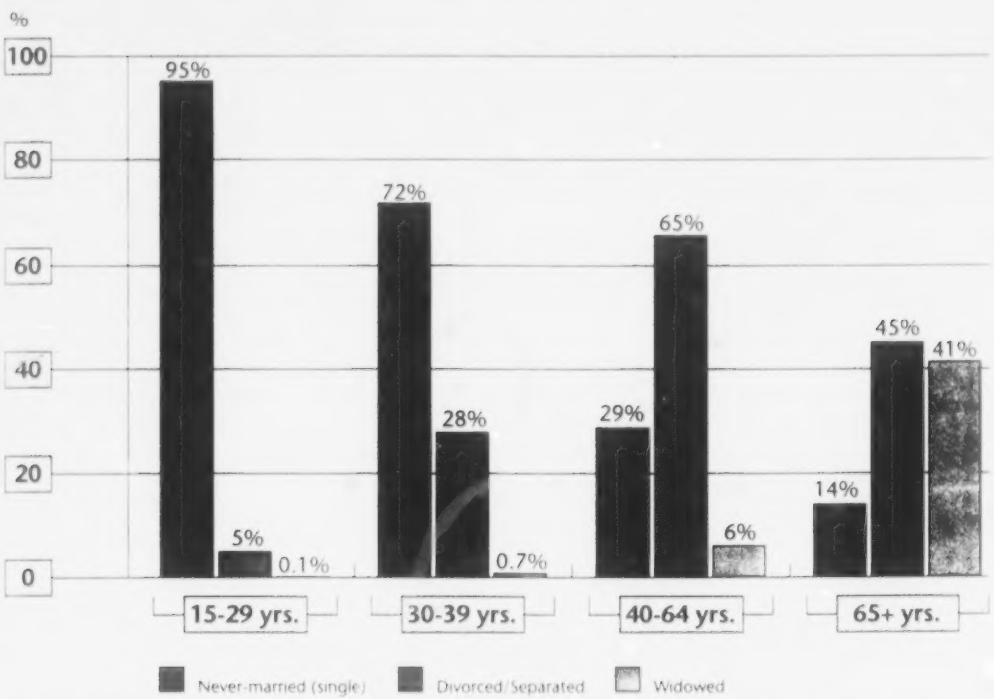
There was considerable provincial variance among the proportion of people living common law who were separated or divorced. In Ontario, 40% of people in a common-law relationship were divorced or separated. The proportion was 37% in British Columbia, 36% in Nova Scotia, and 36% in Alberta. At the other end of the scale, the proportion for the Northwest Territories was 16%, for Newfoundland 24% and Quebec 26%.

And so what?

The reasons for living common law vary. Couples may choose this type of relationship as a trial stage before marriage. They may be awaiting a divorce before remarriage or simply seeking a partner after being widowed. For others, common-law unions are not a prelude to marriage or a trial stage before marriage. It is simply the preferred pattern of family formation - they simply choose not to marry. Although not counted in the official statistics as living common law, others were living together in same-sex unions.

Common-law relationships are established without formal proceedings and do not alter the legal marital status of the partners. Nevertheless, provincial legislators have, for certain purposes, extended the definition of "spouse" to include unmarried couples. As such, many although not all rights and obligations of marriage are extended to unmarried couples on the basis of a set period of cohabitation or if the couple has had a child together.

19. Legal Marital Status of Persons Living Common-Law, by Age Group (1996)



Source: Population 15 Years and Over Living in Common-Law Unions by Age Groups (12) and Sex (3), Showing Legal Marital Status (5), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1991 and 1996 Censuses (100% Data) 216 ivt.

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20. 'Til death do us part?

In 1997, 67,408 couples divorced. After peaking in 1987, when 96,200 divorces were recorded, the number of divorces declined abruptly, reaching the lowest number since the 1985 Amendments to the *Divorce Act*.

Among the provinces, divorce rates were highest in Quebec (46 divorces per 100 marriages) and British Columbia (45). They were lowest in Prince Edward Island (24), Newfoundland and New Brunswick (each at 26 per 100 marriages). Between 1995 and 1996, divorce rates declined overall, with marked decreases in Ontario and Quebec but increases in Newfoundland and British Columbia.

Of the Canadian couples who married in 1968/69, eleven percent were divorced before their 10th wedding anniversary. Fourteen percent of those who married in 1973/74, had divorced before their marriage was ten years old and of those who married in 1983/84, eighteen percent did not stay married long enough to mark their eleventh anniversary. Based on 1996 divorce rates, 37% of marriages were expected to end in divorce.[1]

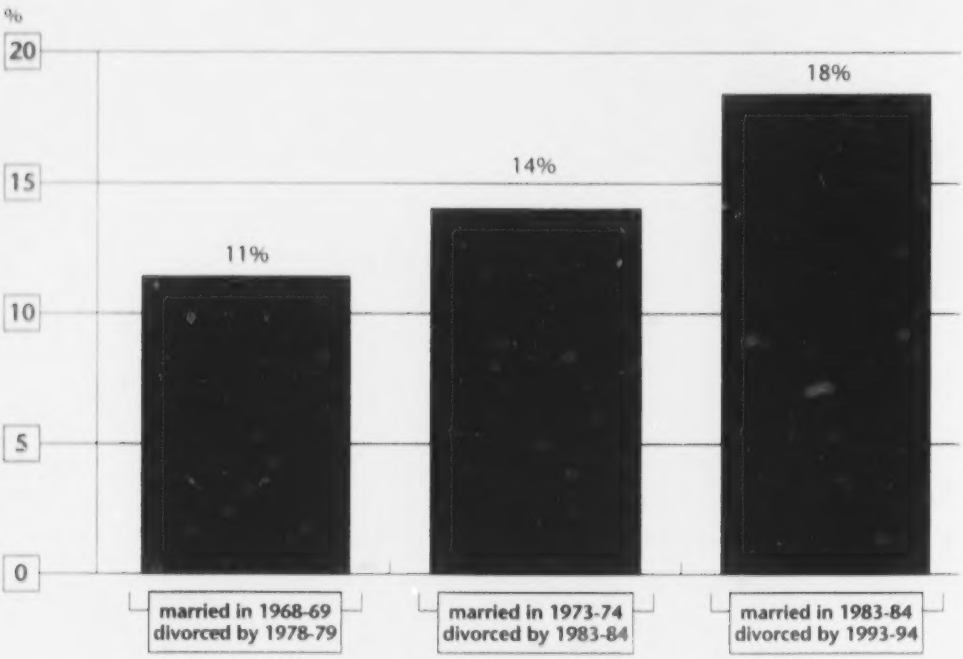
And so what?

The divorce rate has risen throughout the last quarter of the twentieth century, with peak years following changes to the Divorce Act. Recent declines in the divorce rate reflect lower marriage rates, an increase in the number of legal separations and the increasing prevalence of common-law unions. Interestingly, both the marriage and divorce rates reached unprecedented highs immediately following World War II. In 1946, the divorce rate was three times its pre-war level. Marriages entered into too quickly and too young ended, prompting some "experts" to lament the collapse of marriage and the decline of "family values".

In 1995, more than 50,000 Canadian children experienced the divorce of their parents. Others whose parents were not legally married but became separated also found themselves in a period of family transition and uncertainty [2]. For some children, the divorce of their parents meant an escape from a violent and abusive home life. For others, it was a time of grief and often separation from a parent.

[1] Statistics Canada, *The Daily*, January 29, 1999
[2] Statistics Canada, *Divorces*, 1995,1997

20. Percentage of Marriages Ending in Divorce Before 10th Wedding Anniversary



Source: Peron et al. *Canadian Families at the Approach of the Year 2000*, Statistics Canada, 1999.

Number of Divorces in Canada and by province (1997)

	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
Divorces	67,408	822	243	1,983	1,373	17,478	23,629	2,625	2,198	7,185	9,692	101	79

Sources: Marriages, Statistics Canada, CANSIM, *http://www.statcan.ca/english/Pgdb/People/Families/famil04.htm*
Divorces, Statistics Canada, The Daily, May 18, 1999.

21. If at first you don't succeed...

A marriage is considered a remarriage if one or both partners were married before. The remarriage rate is the ratio of the number of remarriages among widowed and divorced Canadians to the total number of widowed and divorced people aged 18 and over.

Until 1990, the number of remarriages increased along with increases in the divorce rate, doubling between 1970 and 1989 from 29,975 to 62,276.

In the 90s, however, there was a notable drop in the numbers of divorced and widowed Canadians who remarried. In 1996, one third of all marriages involved at least one spouse who had been to the altar before. However, the remarriage *rate* was falling. In the 90s, the rate for men fell from 63.2 per 1,000 population to 45.4 and for women from 22.8 to 19.4, as many divorced people chose living common law over remarriage.

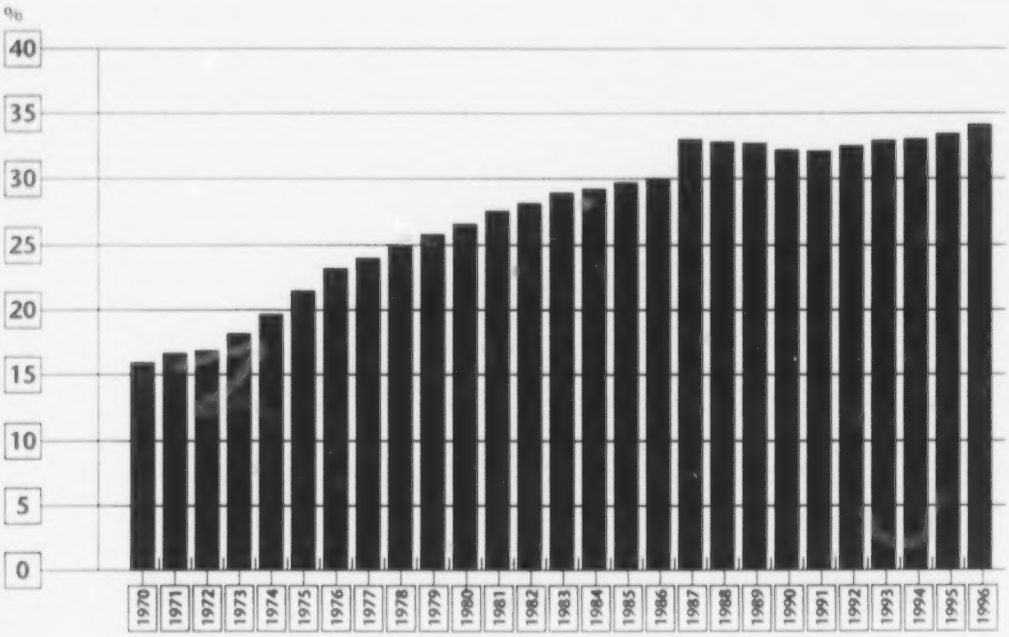
Of those who did remarry, the average age of previously married brides was 39.8 years and previously married grooms, 43.4 years. Very few remarriages involved a widowed partner (less than 5%). Widows were, on average 55.5 years of age at the time of remarriage and widowers averaged 62.1 years.

And so what?

Although the remarriage rate has dropped, about two-thirds of both female and male lone-parents can be expected to either marry again or cohabit with a new partner.

When divorced people with children choose to remarry or live common law with a new partner, they create new families constructed around relationships between step-parents and step-children, step-brothers and step-sisters, half-brothers and half-sisters. To understand the lives of many children today, it is important to know not only how many parents and grandparents they have but also how many cousins, aunts, uncles and other assorted kin. It is also important to understand that children in remarried families may live from time to time with two different sets of parents in two separate households.

21. Proportion of Marriages in Which at Least One Spouse has been Previously Married (1970-1996)



Source: Statistics Canada, Health Statistics Division, Health Status and Vital Statistics Section, Marriages, Cat. 84-212 and unpublished data, Demography Division, Population Estimates Section.

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22. Happily ever after?

In 1997, there were 159,350 marriages in Canada. Also in the same year, 67,408 couples got divorced, for a ratio of 2.4 marriages for each divorce.

The duration of dissolved marriages grew shorter in the 60s, and has since risen. In 1968, a marriage that ended in divorce lasted an average of 15 years. By the end of the century, the figure was 12.7 years, which is considerably more than the all-time low of 9.1 years recorded in 1986.

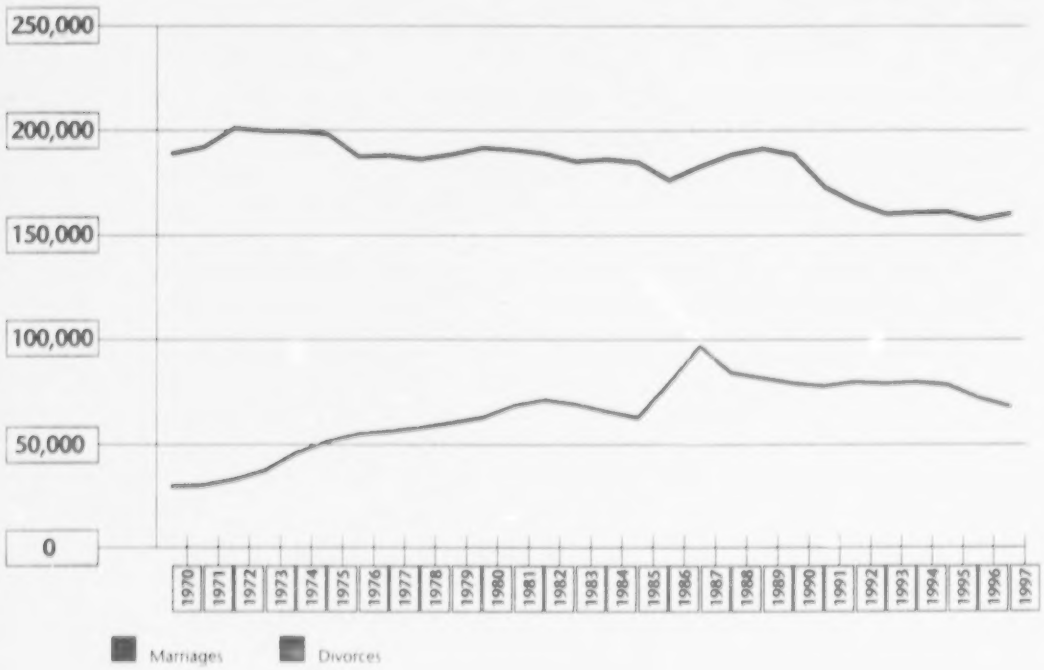
The number of marriages, divorces and re-marriages was declining as the millennium approached. Marriages reached a peak of 200,470 in 1972. Divorces reached their peak, of 96,200 in 1987 following the 1985 liberalization of the *Divorce Act*. During the 90s, the number of divorces decreased by 12.5%. One reason for the decline in the divorce rate was because more people were living together common law. When common-law relationships end, there is no divorce recorded. By 1996, the rates of marriage and remarriage had also declined from the 80s.

Divorce was most common in Quebec and British Columbia (46 and 45 for every 100 marriages), and least frequent in the Atlantic Provinces (Prince Edward Island 24, Newfoundland and New Brunswick 26).

And so what?

Generally speaking, the number of divorces has shadowed the number of marriages. The 1985 liberalization of the *Divorce Act* allowed divorce simply on the basis of marital breakdown. On the day of the 1901 census, fewer than one half of one percent of Canadians were divorced. By comparison, almost 8% were separated or divorced on census day in 1996.

22. Number of Marriages and Divorces (1970-1997)



Sources: For number of marriages 1970 to 1996, Statistics Canada, Marriages, Cat. 84-212. For 1996 to 1998, Statistics Canada, CANSIM.
For divorces 1969 to 1991, Péron et al. Canadian Families at the Approach of the Year 2000, for 1992 to 1996, Statistics Canada, CANSIM, for 1997, Statistics Canada, The Daily, May 18, 1999.

23. First comes marriage and then the baby-carriage – Still true?

In the last quarter of the twentieth century, more and more babies were born to women who were not married. In 1975, the number of births to not-married women was just over 31,000, or 9% of births. However, by 1996, the number had increased threefold to 103,500, and these babies accounted for 31% of all births.

The term "not-married" refers to women who are not married at the time of having a child. The reasons can vary: they can be never-married, divorced, separated, widowed or, as is most often the case, living in a common-law partnership. Three quarters of all children born to not-married women are born into common-law partnerships.

The province with the lowest number of births to women who are not married is Ontario at 17 percent. The province with the highest is Quebec at 50% - which is not surprising in light of the significantly higher proportion of common-law unions in the province.

And so what?

The large majority of children born to mothers who are not married at the time of the child's birth nonetheless begin life in a family with both their biological parents present. Estimates suggest that no more than 5% of babies born throughout the 80s were born to women without partners.[1]

[1] Nicole Marcil-Gratton, "Growing Up with a Single Parent, A Transitional Experience? Some Demographic Measurements," *Single Parent Families: Perspectives on Research and Policy*, eds. Joe Hudson and Burt Galaway (Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, 1993), pp. 78-79.

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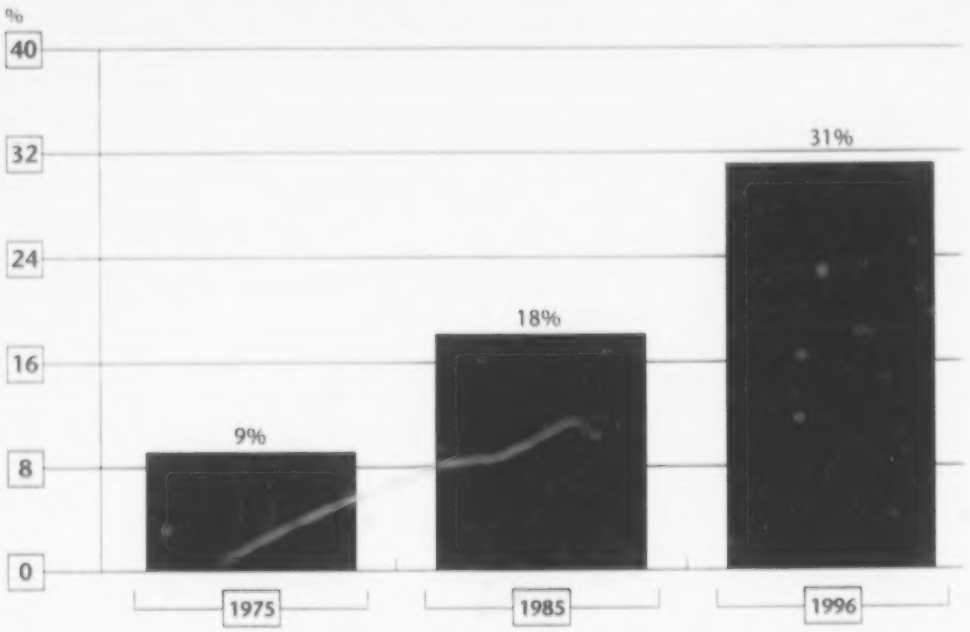
23. Births to Not-married Women* as a Percentage of Total Births (1975, 1985 and 1996)



*Not-married women includes single women who may be part of a common-law relationship, and women who are divorced, separated, or widowed.

Births to Not Married Women, by Province (1996)

	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
Births to not married women	1,356	476	3,440	2,827	41,925	19,577	4,940	4,354	8,983	7,242	187	989
As percent of all births	27%	28%	33%	35%	50%	17%	32%	34%	24%	18%	42%	64%

Source: Statistics Canada, Annual Demographic Statistics 1998, Cat. 91-213

24. Boomers and their babies

Many of the baby-boomers who grew up with three or four brothers or sisters chose to have only one or two children.

Demographers calculate the total fertility rate (TFR) based on the number of births per woman aged 15 to 49 years. Replacement rate, or the number of births necessary to maintain a stable population, is 2.1 births per woman.

Canada's TFR recorded in 1996 was 1.6 – significantly below replacement rate. Canada's low rate does not mean that there are fewer families, but rather that there are fewer *large* families of more than two or three children than were common in the past. At the height of the baby boom in the late 1950s, the fertility rate reached almost four children per woman. Only fifteen years later, it had fallen to two and continued to decline to an unprecedented low of 1.58 in 1987. The rate climbed back up modestly to 1.71 in 1992 but fell again to 1.60 in 1996.

And so what?

Although the earth's population doubled from three to more than six billion people over the course of the twentieth century, the TFR of practically all the developed nations declined dramatically.

Most demographers expect Canada's fertility rate to stay below the replacement level of 2.1 in the coming decades. There are many factors associated with the decline in fertility rates. Obviously the widespread availability of effective means of contraception since the 60s has had an enormous impact on couples' ability to choose the size of their families. In addition, women's rate of participation in the labour force has increased dramatically in the last twenty years. Also the demand for higher levels of job skills in an increasingly competitive labour market has led many people to postpone marriage and childbearing in favour of more education.

24. Total Fertility Rate (1951-1996)

Source: For 1951 to 1992, *Canadian Families at the Approach of the Year 2000*; i.e 1993 to 199-, The Daily; for 1996, Annual Demographic Statistics 1998, Cat. #91-213

Fertility Rates (per 1,000) Canada and the provinces (1996)

T.F.R.	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
	1.6	1.3	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.6	1.7	2.7

Source: Statistics Canada, Cat. #91-213

25. Where have all the siblings gone?

Children born at the end of the century were more likely to be only children (or to have fewer siblings) than those born a half-century earlier. Of the approximately 365,000 babies born in 1995, almost half were first-born children, just over one-third were second-born, and just under one-quarter were third-born (or more). By contrast, back in 1951, only a little over a quarter were first-born, and nearly a half were the third or subsequent children.

By the year 2000, women were having their first child three years later (on average) than twenty-five years earlier, and they also were having fewer children. In the 1960s and 70s, Canadian women having their first baby were likely to be 23 or 24 years old. First-time mothers in the 90s were on average more than 26 years old. Second and third children were also coming later in the mother's life.

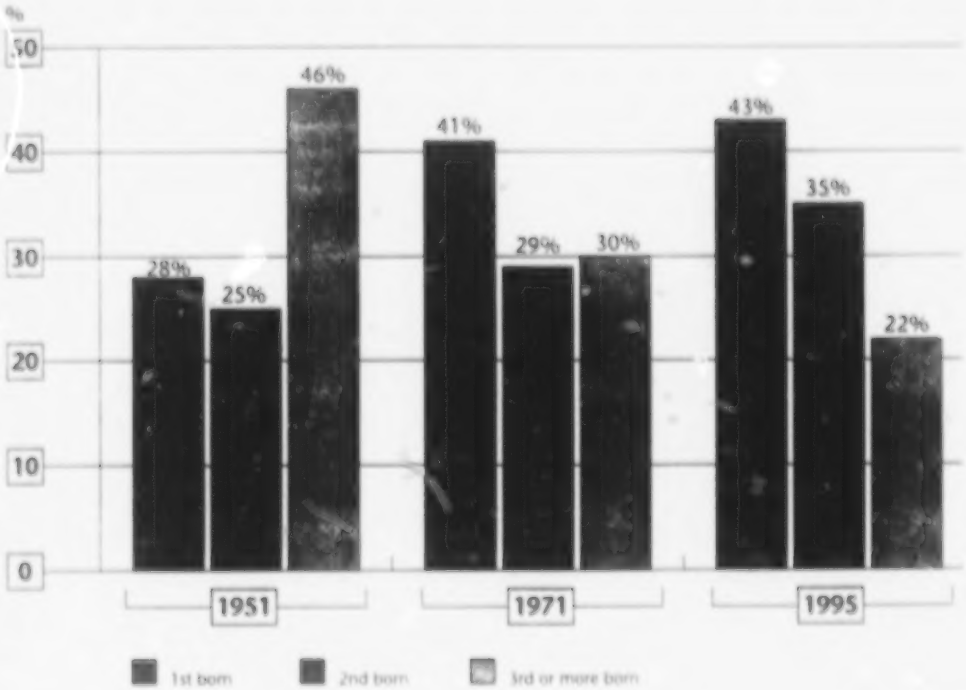
By 1996, many more women were starting their families after their 30th birthday. In that year, 31% of births to women over 30 were first births, compared to only 12% back in 1951. In other words, more than two of every five children born near the millennium will be the oldest or only child in the family. In 1951, almost three-quarters of all children had older brothers or sisters.

And so what?

Almost half of the babies born in 1996 were to women 30 years of age or older. In this unprecedented trend over the last quarter of the century, the number of births to women aged 30 to 34 increased by 115%. Correspondingly, the number of births to women under the age of 25 declined by 41%, and by 42% for women under 20 years of age.

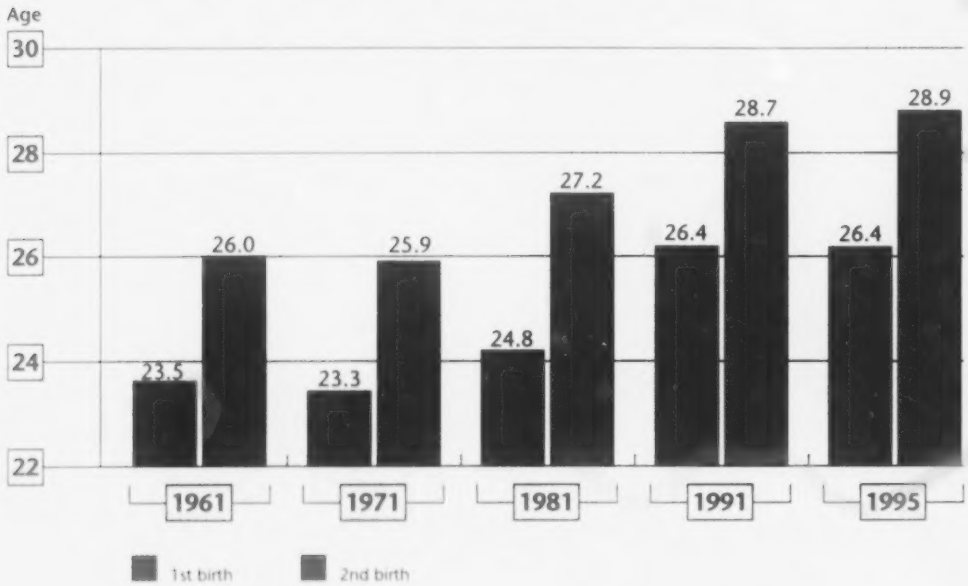
At the end of the century, most Canadians "planned" their families. Typically, they wait longer before having children and choose to have fewer than did their own parents or grandparents. For women, these decisions may mean that they devote less of their adult lives to caring for and nurturing children. For the kids, the decisions of the adults mean that they are growing up with fewer brothers and sisters and cousins. For the parents, there will be fewer sons and daughters to provide support to them in the years to come.

25. Distribution of Births by Birth Order (1951, 1971, 1995)



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Social Trends, Winter 1995, and Births and Deaths 1995, Catalogue 84-210-XIB

25a. Average Age of Mothers Having Their First or Second Born Child (1961 – 1995)



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue nos. 84-210 and 84-210-XIB.

Percentage Distribution of Births by Age of Mother

	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40 & over	Total
1976	11%	33%	36%	15%	4%	1%	100%
1986	6	25	39	22	6	1	100
1996	6	18	32	30	12	2	100

* Data for 1976 and 1986 do not include Newfoundland.
Source: Statistics Canada, Births and Deaths 1995, Cat. 84-210-XIB, and Annual Demographic Statistics 1998, Catalogue 91-213.

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Concerned fathers can begin rocking a few boats in the workplace. Employers need to hear more often an employee say he can't work the weekend or stay late because he has a date with his daughter. A father needs to be able to say good night to colleagues without apology when his son is waiting to go to the hockey game.

Fathers will have to step out of the fairly rigid social straitjackets they have inherited. But for those who choose, the current climate supports the "new father" movement, which encourages dads to reach beyond their societal-given role as breadwinner and give a higher priority to their divine-given role as parent.

Reginald W. Bibby and Donald C. Posterski (1992), *Teen Trends: A Nation in Motion*. Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Co. Limited: 210.

26. Canada's kids (and young adults)

At the last census of the century, 9.7 million Canadian children and young people under the age of 25 lived with their families. Of the nearly 10 million Canadians under the age of 25, 8.6 million were children who lived in a two-parent or lone-parent family. More than seven out of ten lived in families with two legally married parents, about one in ten lived with a common-law couple, and almost two out of ten lived with one parent, usually their mother.

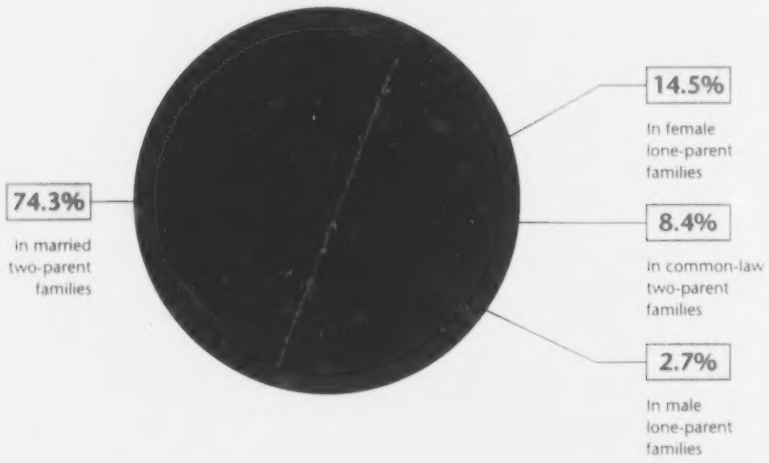
The remaining 1.1 million young Canadians lived in other situations that are difficult to count. Approximately 491,000 of the older ones were themselves married or living common law, and some were lone parents. Some were divorced, and had moved back into their parental home; these were counted among the 215,000 young Canadians categorized as 'living with other relatives.' Another 297,000 were living with non-relatives at the time of the 1996 census. About 121,000 were young adults living on their own.

In Newfoundland, a little more than eight out of ten children under 25 were living with married parents. In the Northwest Territories, Quebec and Yukon, a greater proportion of children lived with common-law couples than elsewhere (22.5%, 16.5%, and 16.4% respectively). In Yukon, Nova Scotia, Quebec and British Columbia, the proportion of children in lone-parent families was somewhat higher than the national average of 17.2%.

And so what?

This picture of the family circumstances of children and young people is a snapshot at century end. Over the last thirty years, Canada has seen increased rates of separation and divorce, the declining popularity of marriage, a growing number of common-law unions, an increasing recognition of same-sex couples, and more blended families. These changes have resulted in more complex lives for many children who will grow up in a number of different family environments during their childhood and adolescence. The variety within families means that young people are growing up among peers whose family lives often differ markedly from their own.

26. Never-married Children Age 24 and Under, by Family Type (1996)



	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
Total never-married sons and/or daughters at home 24 years and under	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
In families of now-married couples	74.3	80.5	79.6	75.0	75.9	65.1	78.0	76.2	75.8	78.0	75.7	63.2	60.8
In families of common-law couples	8.4	6.2	5.3	6.2	7.9	16.5	5.0	6.9	7.4	6.8	6.4	16.4	22.5
In male lone-parent families	2.7	1.9	2.2	2.4	2.4	3.2	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.8	3.5	3.5
In female lone-parent families	14.5	11.4	12.9	16.4	13.8	15.1	14.6	14.4	14.3	12.7	15.1	16.9	13.2

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census

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27. Adoptive parents and their children

At the end of the twentieth century, only a very small proportion of children (1.2% of those under 12 years of age) had been adopted. Of these 57,300 adopted children, six out of ten had two adoptive parents, and the remaining almost four out of ten had one adoptive parent.

Many adoptions take place because couples (or, more rarely, individuals) cannot have children of their own. Adoptions also occur after a parent divorces (or less often, is widowed) and then marries a new spouse who adopts the children from the previous marriage.

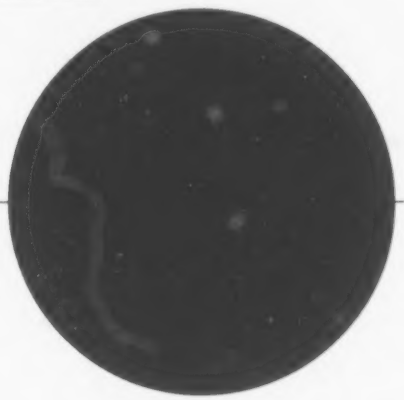
And so what?

Attitudes towards adoption have changed. Earlier in the twentieth century, many adoptive parents tried to conceal the identity of the child's biological parents (and, in the case of cross-ethnic adoption, even their culture). In recent years, many adults who were adopted when they were children have sought and discovered their biological parents. And families increasingly choose open adoptions in which the biological parent(s) are encouraged to participate in the life of the adopted child.

At the end of the century, international adoptions are increasing in number. Canadian-born parents are now often raising children from different races and cultural origins from their own, and encouraging their children to explore and celebrate their heritage.

27. Number of Children Under Age 12 with Adoptive Parent(s) (1994/95)

In Canada, 1.2 percent of children under the age of 12 have at least one adoptive parent



Source: Statistics Canada National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, 1994/95 microdata.

28. Mine, yours and ours – Canada's "blended" families

In 1995, there were approximately 3.7 million families comprised of married or common-law couples with their never-married children living at home. These parents represented nine out of ten couples.[1]

In the other one in ten couples (431,800 in total), at least one of the children was being raised by a biological or adoptive parent and a stepmother or, as was more often the case, a stepfather. Of these stepfamilies, about one in three was a blended family which included another child or children born of the current union. About 70% of children under the age of 12 who lived in stepfamilies were part of a blended family. Fewer than one in ten (8.6% of all children under the age of 12), lived in a stepfamily.

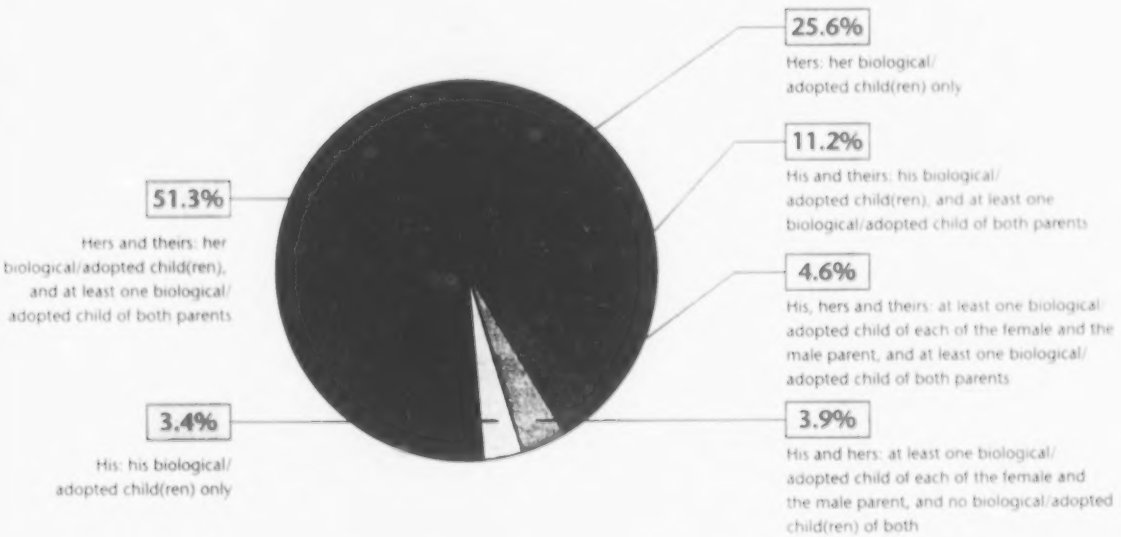
And so what?

Stepfamilies have always been part of the Canadian family scene. In the earlier part of the century, stepfamilies were most often formed when a widow or widower with children remarried. By the end of the century, they are most often formed when a mother or father remarries or cohabits after separation or divorce. There are about four stepfathers for every one stepmother because women are far more likely than men to have custody (single or joint) of their children after a divorce.

Adapting to life in a stepfamily or a blended family is likely to challenge the adults who must come to agree on how to raise his, her and their children. It is also a challenge to children who must learn to get along with their new step or half brothers and sisters while still being involved in the life of their non-custodial parent.

[1] Statistics Canada, *General Social Survey*, 1995.

28. Distribution of Children 0 to 11 Years in Step-families, by Step-family Type (1994-1995)


25.6%
Hers: her biological/ adopted child(ren) only
11.2%
His and theirs: his biological/ adopted child(ren), and at least one biological/adopted child of both parents
4.6%
His, hers and theirs: at least one biological/ adopted child of each of the female and the male parent, and at least one biological/ adopted child of both parents
3.9%
His and hers: at least one biological/ adopted child of each of the female and the male parent, and no biological/adopted child(ren) of both
51.3%
Hers and theirs: her biological/adopted child(ren), and at least one biological/ adopted child of both parents
3.4%
His: his biological/ adopted child(ren) only

Source: Ross, D., Scott K., Kelly M., "Overview: Children in Canada in the 1990's in *Growing up in Canada*, 1996. Human Resource Development Canada and Statistics Canada, Cat. 89-550MPE.

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29. Mom's place or dad's place?

Child custody agreements were involved in approximately seven of every ten divorces.

Of the divorces that involved custody, in more than two out of three cases the mother was given sole custody of the children. In one out of ten cases the father received custody, and in one out of five cases the parents shared joint custody.

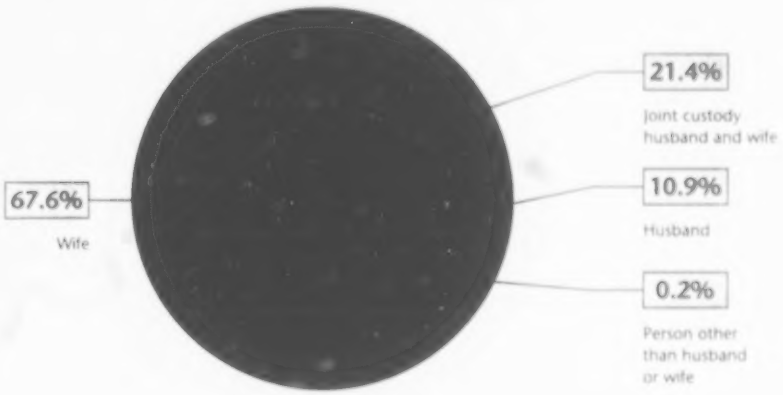
Ontario and Quebec were more likely to award custody to the mother (75% as opposed to the 68% average across Canada). However, in Ontario, joint custody was more likely than in Quebec (18% vs. 11%). Quebec fathers were more likely to be custodial parents than Ontario fathers (15% vs. 8%). Joint custody was more likely in Manitoba and Alberta (39% and 38%) than elsewhere in the country.

And so what?

Although divorce is traumatic for children, most adapt well over the long term. For some, home life actually improves as they escape from anger, conflict and violence. However, many fall into poverty. Many lose their friends by moving to a new home or change schools. Some lose contact with their non-custodial parent. Others must cope as best they can with continuing conflict between their parents. Some must adapt to life in a blended family with a step parent and new brothers and sisters.

In order to lessen the burden of divorce on children, lawyers, mediators, the courts, legislators and parents themselves increasingly recognize the important roles of both parents in the lives of their children even after they are no longer married to each other.

29. Dependent Children by Party to Whom Custody was Granted (1995)



	Husband	Wife	Joint Custody Husband and Wife	Person other than Husband or Wife
Canada	10.9%	67.6%	21.4%	0.2%
NFLD	8.4	69.8	21.6	0.2
PEI	6.7	50.4	42.1	0.8
NS	7.6	66.0	25.7	0.7
NB	12.5	68.8	18.7	
Quebec	15.0	73.8	11.1	0.1
Ontario	7.8	74.5	17.6	0.1
Manitoba	6.2	54.3	39.2	0.2
Sask.	8.0	67.0	24.7	0.3
Alberta	6.6	55.1	38.3	0.1
BC	12.1	60.3	27.4	0.2
Yukon	6.0	45.2	48.8	
NWT	11.5	53.8	34.6	

Source: Statistics Canada's Divorces 1995, Cat.#84-213-XPB

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30. Parenting on one's own

At the close of the millennium, there were 1.1 million lone parents in Canada, the vast majority (83%) of them women. More than half (58%) were separated or divorced. Roughly a quarter were single or never married (22%), and one fifth were widowed (20%).

In 1931, 13.6% of all families were lone parent, most often lead by a widow or widower. The proportion dropped to an all-time low of 8.2% in 1966. Subsequently, both the number and percentage of lone-parent families relative to all families rose significantly. From 1971 to 1996, the number of lone-parents increased by close to 250%. In contrast, the total number of families increased by only 55%.

The reasons for lone parenthood changed in the second half of the twentieth century. At mid-century, the death of a spouse was the primary cause; 60% of all lone parents were widows or widowers. By the millennium, widowed single parents accounted for only 20%.

By 1971, 45% of all lone parents had been either separated or divorced. By century end, the figure was 58%. In 1971, 8% of lone parents had never been married in comparison to 22% in 1996.

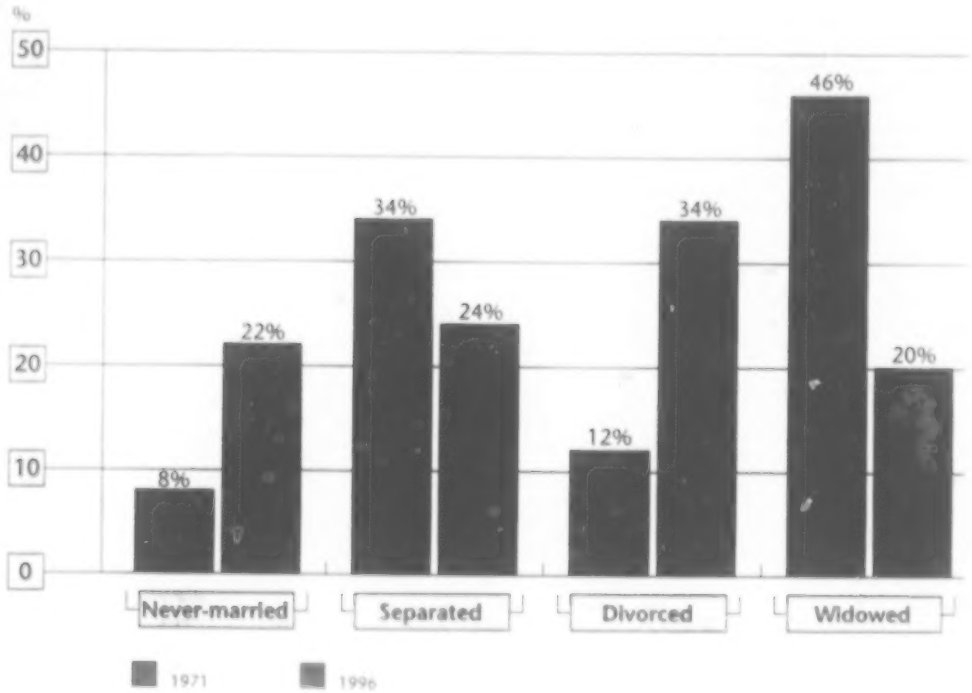
The increase in the number of lone parents varied by province, with British Columbia recording a threefold increase in less than 25 years. Manitoba and Saskatchewan had the lowest increase (2.0 and 2.1 times).

The number of male lone parents increased most in Alberta (2.5 times) and least in Newfoundland, Manitoba and Saskatchewan (1.4 times).

And so what?

For the first three-quarters of the century, a lone parent was most likely to be the sole survivor of a former marriage. In contrast, most children living with a lone parent at century end have another parent who is still alive, albeit one living in another household.

30. Marital Status of Lone-parents (1971 and 1996)



Source: Statistics Canada 1996 Census - The Nation, Series Lone-parent families in Private Households by Sex of Lone-parent (3), Age Groups of Never-married Sons and or Daughters at Home (13), for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1971-1996 The 1996 Dimension Series

31. Who Are Canada's lone parents?

Lone parents may be married, divorced, widowed, separated or never married.

At mid-century, the death of a spouse was the major cause of lone parenthood. Two in three lone mothers and more than one in five lone fathers were widowed. By 1971, one in two lone mothers was a widow and over one in three lone fathers was a widower. By the end of the century, only one in five lone parents was widowed – even though the actual number of widowed persons was almost the same as in 1971.

In 1971, 12% of lone mothers were divorced and 32% were separated, while 11% of lone fathers were divorced and 39% were separated. At the end of the century, separation or divorce were the most common reasons for lone parenthood. One-third of lone mothers were divorced and almost one-quarter were separated, and more than two out of three lone fathers were divorced (40%) or separated (29%).

The number of never-married mothers having children out of wedlock increased in the last quarter of the century. Between 1971 and 1996 the proportion increased from 6% to 24% of all lone mothers. The proportion of never-married lone fathers remained the same at 12%.

Typically, lone parents eventually married, remarried or established a common-law relationship. Two out of ten lone-parent mothers, and nearly four out of ten lone-parent fathers were no longer lone parents after one year; and after five years the majority of lone mothers (56%) and fathers (79%) were no longer lone parents.

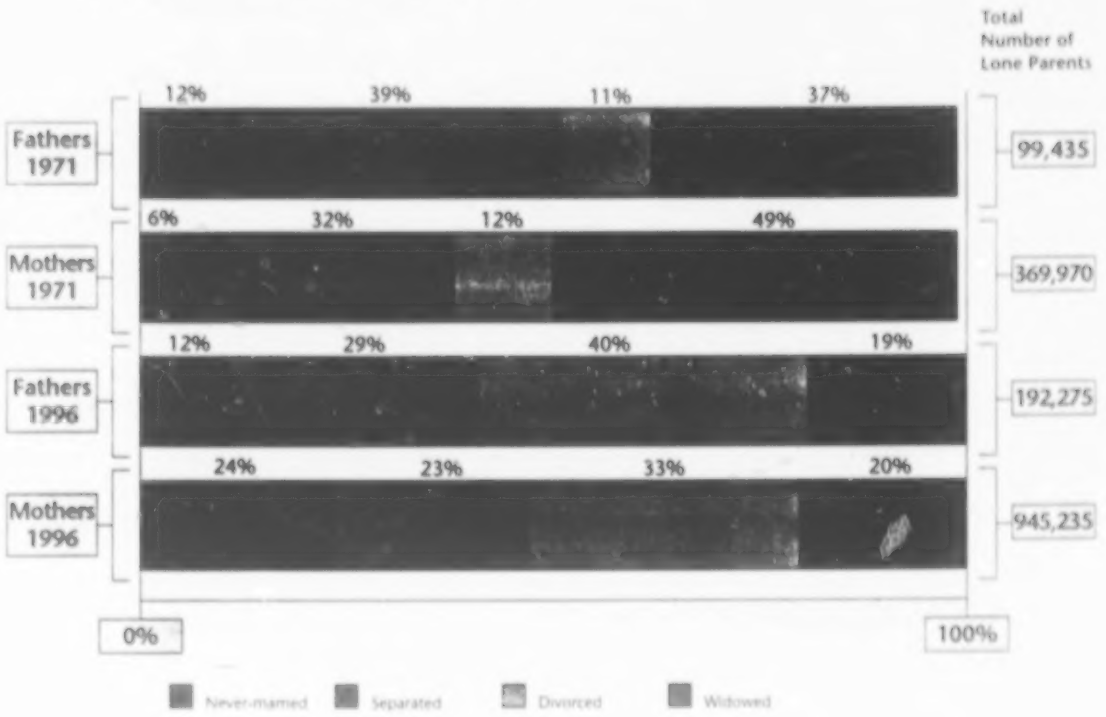
On average, lone-parent families were smaller than those with two parents. Nine out of ten lone parents had one or two children.

And so what?

Lone parenthood is usually a temporary state. Demographers estimate that just over one-third of Canadian women and just under one-quarter of men will be lone parents at some point in their lives.[1]

[1] Helene Desrosier, Heather Juby, Celine LeBourdais, "Female Family Paths" in Peron et al., *Canadian Families at the Approach of the Year 2000*, Statistics Canada, 1999, p. 124. Helene Desrosier, Heather Juby, Celine LeBourdais, "Male Family Paths," in Peron et al. *Canadian Families at the Approach of the Year 2000*, Statistics Canada, 1999, p. 180.

31. Marital Status of Lone-parent Fathers and Mothers (1971 and 1996)



Source: Statistics Canada 1996 Census – Nation Series Lone-parent families in Private Households by Sex of Lone-parent (3), Age Groups of Never-married Sons and/or Daughters at Home (13), for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1971-1996. The 1996 Dimension Series.

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32. Pregnant teens and teenage moms

Contrary to popular opinion, most out-of-wedlock babies are *not* born to teenagers. In 1995, nearly six out of ten mothers giving birth to out-of-wedlock babies were between the ages of 20 and 29. Moreover, the number of out-of-wedlock babies born to teenage women *equaled* the number born to women over thirty who were not married at the time of birth.

Births among women aged 15 to 19 decreased over the last quarter of the twentieth century, in part because the number of teenagers declined. However, the major reason for the decrease was access to information, birth control and abortion. At the end of the century, young women were less likely to carry their pregnancy to term. In 1974, two thirds of pregnant teenagers had their babies; in 1994, only half of them gave birth. Although the rate of pregnancy dropped significantly between 1974 and 1987 (from 53.7 to 41.1 per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19), it has increased since then to 48.8 pregnancies per 1,000 teens.

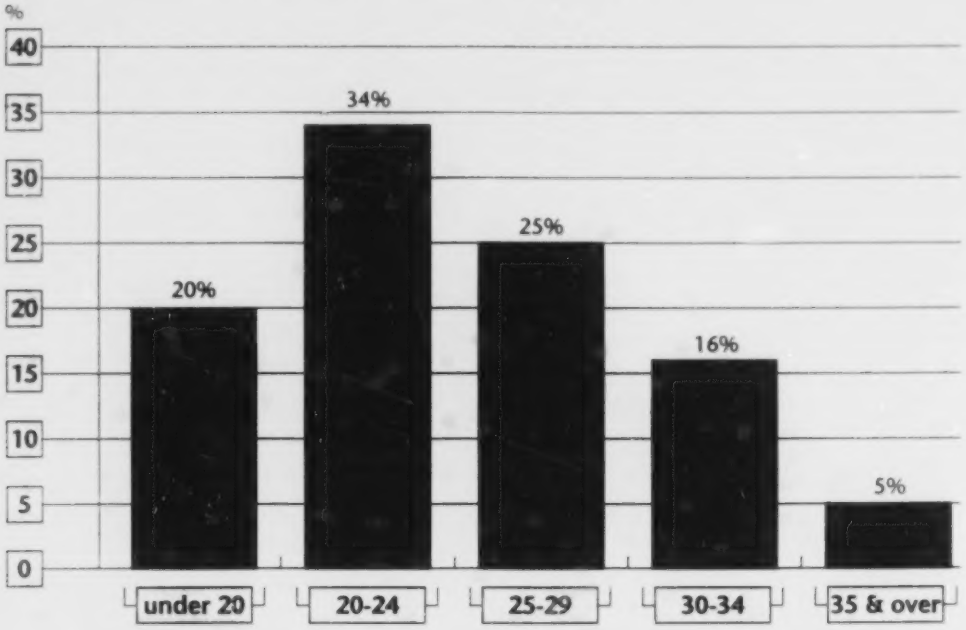
In 1974, only one in four teens who gave birth was single, whereas, in 1994, eight of ten teenage women who gave birth were not married (although many of them might have been living common law).

In the Atlantic Provinces, teen pregnancy rates were higher than the Canadian average during the 70s, but lower in the 90s. Among the other provinces, Quebec was exceptional for having recorded the only increase in teenage pregnancy rates between 1974 and 1994. Even so, because Quebec had the lowest rate in 1974 (only 21 per 1,000), it still had one of the lowest rates in 1994.

And so what?

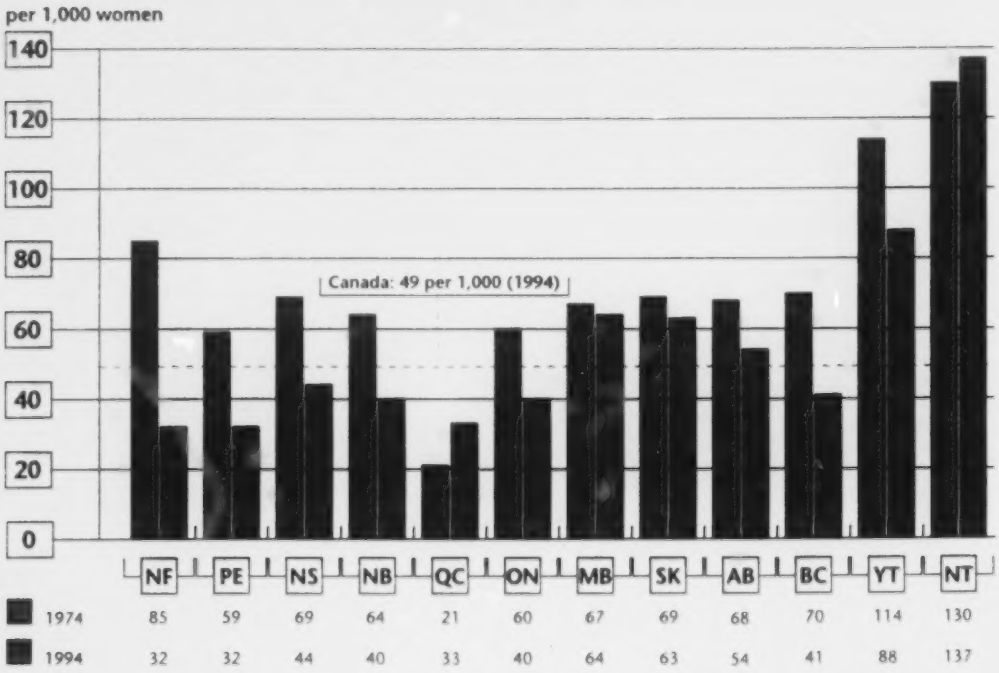
Compared to the teenagers of the 90s, teens in 1971 were more likely to get pregnant, more likely to give birth if they did so and more likely to be or to get married before the birth of the child. They were also more likely to give up their child for adoption if they remained unmarried. Although the number and rate of teen pregnancies has been rising since 1987, it would be inaccurate to claim that there is an 'epidemic' of adolescent pregnancy in Canada. Canadian teen pregnancy rates are often confused with U.S. rates, which are twice as high. Nevertheless, there were more teenage mothers visible in Canadian communities in the 90s because most of those who gave birth kept their children rather than placing them for adoption.

32. Births to Not Married Women: Percentage Distribution by Age of Mother (1995)



Source: Statistics Canada, Births and Deaths 1995, catalogue 84-210-XIB.

32a. Teenage Pregnancy: Pregnancy rates per 1,000 Women Aged 15 to 19, by Province (1974-1994)



Source: Statistics Canada, Health Reports, Winter 1997, Vol. 9, No. 3, Catalogue 82-003-XPB.

CANADA'S FAMILIES– WHAT THEY DO

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The Vanier Institute of the Family

33. Busy, busy, busy: Where does all the time go?

Statistics Canada defines "full time work" as 30+ hours per week, and most employed Canadians work a 35 or 40-hour week. However, after adding overtime, travel and office work brought home, many people at the end of the twentieth century worked 45 or more hours per week at their paid employment. Moreover, before and after they went out to work, they did all the unpaid work that sustains their families and communities.

Outside of the time needed for sleeping, eating and personal hygiene, how much of the week was devoted to paid and unpaid work? For married women between the ages of 25 and 44 with full-time jobs and dependent children, the answer was 74%. Fathers of the same age employed full-time were not far behind, at 71%. Men tended to spend longer hours "on the job" than women, but women's share of the family-related tasks more than made up for the difference. Men aged 25 to 44 who were employed full-time and who did not have children spent about 50 hours per week on the job. Married men with dependent children devoted 48 hours to their jobs. Married women without children spent nearly 43 hours per week on work and work-related activities. Married women with jobs and children spent nearly 5 hours less on their formal jobs, but they devoted another 34 hours to family-related activity. Their job-work and family-work together totaled a workweek of 70+ hours.

In many families with both parents working, the job-work plus family-work total was 120 hours or more per week, or the equivalent of three 40-hour weeks.

And so what?

Providing and caring for a family is demanding work. Both men and women have to juggle work and family responsibilities, but many employers and co-workers still expect men to be more committed to their jobs than women. Accordingly, women tend to be doubly burdened by both jobs and families. When children or family members are sick, or family crises occur, it is usually women who take time from their jobs. Often employees with families miss career opportunities when they need to put family responsibilities ahead of the job.

33. Time Use Among Family Members, by Employment Status and Presence of Children (1998)

	(hours per week[1])			
	Paid work and related activities[2]	Unpaid work[3]	Sleep, meals & other personal activities[4]	Free time[5]
Married men aged 25-44				
Employed full-time, with children	48.3	23.1	67.2	29.4
Employed full-time, no children	49.7	16.1	67.9	34.3
Married men aged 45-64				
Employed full-time, with children	48.3	21.0	67.2	31.5
Employed full-time, no children	44.8	17.5	70.7	35.0
Not employed, no children	-	30.8	77.0	58.1
Married men aged 65 and over				
Not employed, no children	-	28.0	80.5	58.1
Married women aged 25-44				
Employed full-time, with children	38.5	34.3	69.3	25.2
Employed full-time, no children	43.4	22.4	70.7	30.1
Employed part-time, with children	20.3	44.8	71.4	31.5
Not employed, no children	1.4	57.4	72.8	35.0
Married women aged 45-64				
Employed full-time, with children	43.4	28.7	67.9	27.3
Employed full-time, no children	39.2	23.8	72.8	32.2
Not employed, no children	-	40.6	77.7	49.7
Married women aged 65 and over				
Not employed, no children	-	33.6	81.9	51.8
Lone-parent mothers aged 25-44				
Employed full-time	44.1	30.8	67.9	25.2

[1] There are 168 hours in a week. Items may not add to 168 due to rounding.
[2] Includes time spent at all jobs, including overtime; related activities include commuting time and time spent looking for work.
[3] Includes household work such as cooking, housekeeping, maintenance and repair, yardwork and shopping, as well as childcare, social support, civic and voluntary activities.
[4] Includes night sleep, meals (excluding restaurant meals), washing, dressing, etc.
[5] Includes time spent socializing (e.g. restaurant meals), passive leisure such as reading and watching T.V., attendance at sporting events, movie theatres and other entertainment events, and active leisure (e.g. cycling, swimming, etc.).

Source: Statistics Canada. Overview of the Time Use of Canadians in 1998. Catalogue no. 12F0080XIE.

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34. Canada's labour force

Over the twentieth century, male labour force participation rates gradually dropped, while rates for women soared. In 1911, nine out of ten men aged 15 and over were in the labour force, that is, were either employed or looking for work. By 1998, seven out of ten men were in the labour force, their lowest participation rate in the century.

Male participation rates fell for many reasons. For example, men aged 65 and over made up a bigger share of the population at the end of the century than they did 30 years earlier. Because seniors' participation rate was relatively low – and declining – overall labour force participation rates declined. In addition, fewer men aged 60-64 were labour force participants due to increasingly early retirement. Finally, the participation rate of young men aged 15-24 also declined, partly because of the poor job prospects facing many younger Canadians.

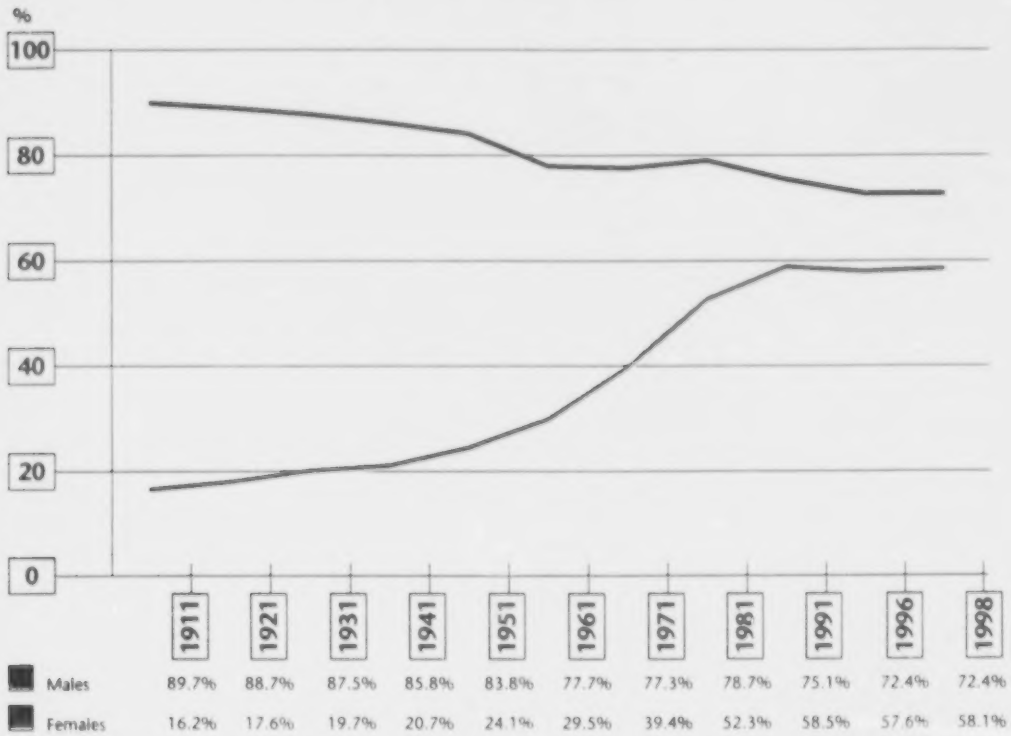
In 1911, most women over age 15 were not in the labour force – only 16% had or were looking for paid employment. Moreover, most female workers were unmarried since it was generally expected that married women would stay at home. Participation rates of all women increased significantly during the Second World War and continued to climb steadily and steeply between 1950 and 1990. By 1998, six out of ten women had jobs – their highest participation rate ever.

At the close of the century, the participation rate for men and women combined was 65%. Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Prince Edward Island were above average. Newfoundland had the lowest and Alberta the highest participation rate for both men and women.

And so what?

Participation rates document the changing nature of the workforce over the twentieth century, as more and more paid employment was shared between men and women. However, roughly equivalent labour force participation rates did not mean equal earnings or responsibilities. On average, women's earnings were not equal to men's, more women worked part-time, and they carried the main load of household duties and child rearing.

34. Labour Force Participation Rates, Males and Females (Aged 15 and over) (1911-1998)



	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	1996	1998
Males	89.7%	88.7%	87.5%	85.8%	83.8%	77.7%	77.3%	78.7%	75.1%	72.4%	72.4%
Females	16.2%	17.6%	19.7%	20.7%	24.1%	29.5%	39.4%	52.3%	58.5%	57.6%	58.1%

Source: For 1911 to 1971, Margrit Eichler, Families in Canada Today, 2nd ed. Toronto: Gage, 1988. For 1981 to 1996, Statistics Canada, Labour Force Historical Review, 1998, Catalogue no. 71F0004XCB.

34a. Labour Force Participation Rates (aged 15 and over), by province, 1998

	Both Sexes	Males	Females
Canada	65.1%	72.4%	58.1%
Newfoundland	54.1	60.7	47.5
Prince Edward Island	66.0	71.5	60.7
Nova Scotia	60.6	68.1	53.6
New Brunswick	60.9	67.4	54.7
Quebec	62.2	70.5	54.3
Ontario	66.3	73.3	59.7
Manitoba	67.1	74.7	59.8
Saskatchewan	66.6	74.4	59.0
Alberta	72.2	79.4	64.9
British Columbia	64.8	71.1	58.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Historical Review 1998, Cat. 71F0004XCB

35. Who's in the Labour force?

At the end of the twentieth century, the majority of women (58%) were in the labour force, whether or not they were married (or living common law). This reversed the situation during the early years of the twentieth century, when nearly all working women were unmarried.

In 1998, in the 25-54 age group, three-quarters of all married women and eight out of ten never-married women had jobs or were looking for them. Moreover, the gender gap had narrowed. For every one hundred married men age 25 to 54, ninety-four were in the labour force. The comparable figure for married women was seventy-seven for every one hundred.

In 1996, among the total population aged 15 and over, married men were the most likely – just over seven out of ten – to be a labour force participant followed by separated men, never-married men, divorced men, divorced or separated women, and finally married and never-married women.

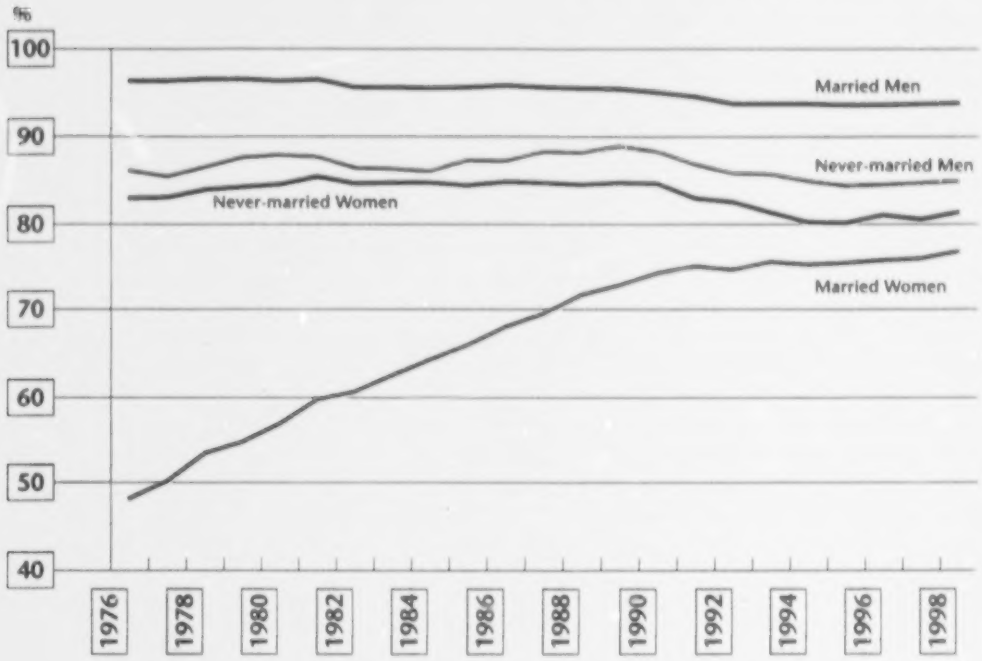
A married woman was least likely to be in the labour force in Newfoundland and most likely to be a labour force participant in Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. In some provinces (Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Saskatchewan), the overall participation rate of married women actually exceeded the rate of single women.

And so what?

Throughout the 1950s, a "working man's wage," was supposed to support a man, his wife and two, three or more children. When asked by the Gallup polling firm in 1960, only 4% of men and 5% of women believed that a woman with young children should work outside the home.[1] By the end of the century, the majority of men and women – single or married – left home each day to go to their jobs.

[1]Cited in Doug Owram (1996), *Born at the Right Time*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, p. 131.

35. Labour Force Participation Rates of Married and Never-married Men and Women (aged 25-54), (1976-1998)



Note: Married includes common-law

Labour Force Participation Rates of Married and Never-married Men and Women (aged 25-54) by province (1976-1998)

	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC
Married men	93.8%	82.5%	92.6%	91.0%	90.1%	93.3%	94.6%	95.8%	95.5%	96.2%	93.1%
Never-married men	84.8	70.3	81.4	81.7	76.5	81.2	87.0	88.0	86.8	90.4	83.9
Never-married women	81.2	68.0	80.0	77.8	73.1	78.3	82.8	81.1	78.6	88.4	81.2
Married women	76.7	64.9	82.7	72.3	73.4	74.0	78.3	80.4	82.4	78.9	76.1

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Historical Review 1998, Cat. 71F0004XCB, CD-Rom.

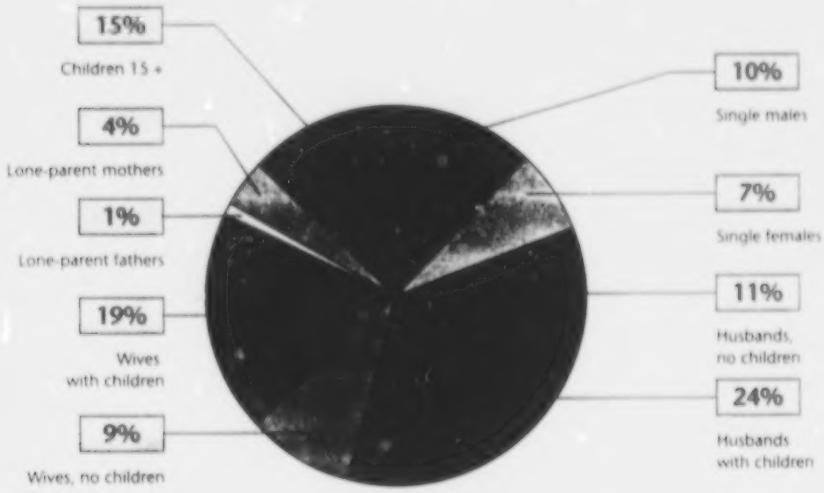
36. Families on the job

On a typical day in Canada in 1996, 13.3 million Canadians were working for pay, and 1.5 million were looking for work. Nearly half of these workers were mothers and fathers with never-married children living at home; 43% were wives or husbands, 5% were lone parents, and 20% were men and women who were married or living common law, and who had no children at home. Children aged 15 and over made up 15% of the labour force (approximately one in seven). The remaining 17% were single men and women.

And so what?

It is misleading to think of the paid labour force simply as workers or consumers. Practically everyone has family responsibilities, family ties and obligations to parents, siblings or other relatives that require time spent together, tasks shared and affection given and received. People with children or those caring for a frail elderly parent bear the heaviest load. Each person in the labour force, when considered as a family member, is a vital strand in the web of relationships that sustain not just the economy but also our families, communities and nation.

36. Who Makes Up the Canadian Labour Force? (1996)



Who Makes Up the Canadian Labour Force, by province (1996)

	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
Total Labour Force (,000s)	14,749	246	70	437	363	3,525	5,568	562	501	1,474	1,954	18	31
Husbands, no children	11%	9%	9%	11%	11%	11%	10%	11%	12%	12%	12%	12%	9%
Husbands with children	24%	29%	25%	25%	26%	24%	24%	24%	24%	23%	22%	20%	25%
Wives, no children	9%	8%	8%	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%	10%	10%	11%	12%	8%
Wives with children	19%	23%	22%	19%	21%	19%	20%	20%	20%	19%	17%	18%	21%
Lone-parent fathers	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Lone-parent mothers	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%
Children 15 +	15%	18%	18%	16%	16%	14%	17%	15%	14%	13%	13%	10%	12%
Single males	10%	5%	8%	8%	7%	10%	9%	10%	10%	11%	12%	13%	12%
Single females	7%	4%	5%	6%	5%	8%	7%	7%	6%	7%	9%	8%	7%

Source : Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series, CD-ROM, 93F0020XCB96004

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37. Mothers and fathers in the job market

What kind of family they lived in and how old their children were had a lot to do with whether or not mothers and fathers were in the labour force (either employed or looking for work) at the end of the century. Overall, fathers were more likely to be in the workforce than mothers. However, the margin narrowed over the last two decades. Close to 95% of fathers with children under the age of 15 were in the labour force. More than three-quarters of mothers with children aged 6 to 14 were in the workforce as were seven out of ten mothers with children under the age of 6.

Family structure also influenced participation rates. Lone parents were least likely to be in the workforce. While 84% of lone fathers with children under age six and 86% of those with school-aged children were labour force participants, 55% of lone mothers with pre-schoolers and 75% with school-aged children were in the workforce.

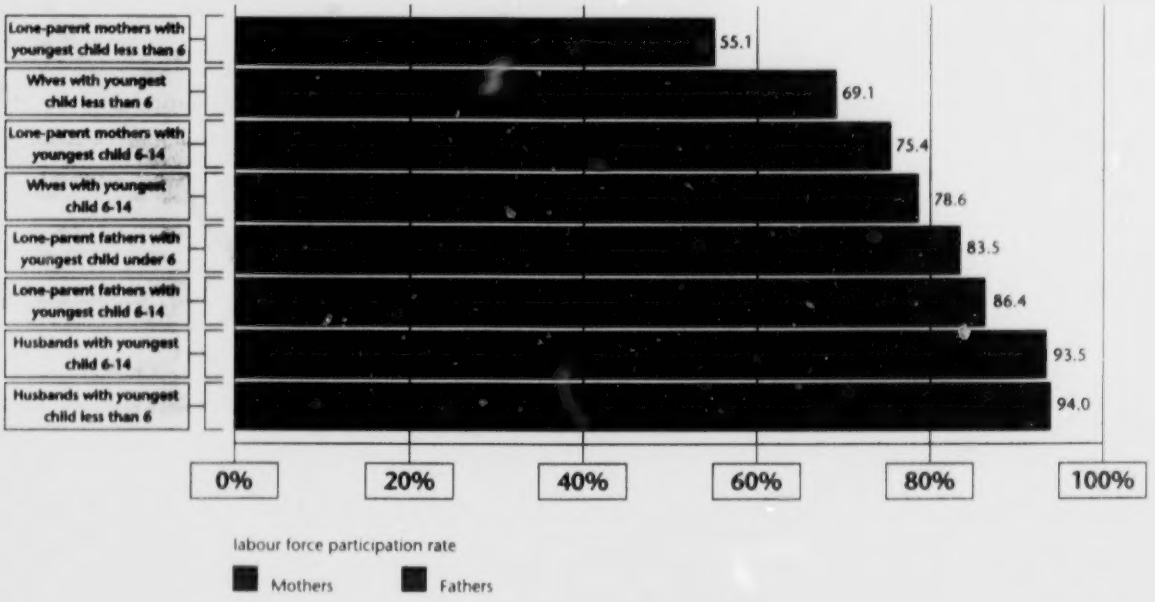
The age of children was crucial for women's labour force participation, but less important for men. Although the majority of mothers—both wives and lone mothers—had jobs, they were less likely to be in the work force than fathers, particularly if they had pre-school children. Three-quarters of all mothers with children of school age had jobs, as did seven out of ten mothers with children aged 3 to 5, and two-thirds of all mothers with children under age 3.

Newfoundland had a lower than average participation rate for mothers while Prince Edward Island had a higher rate. Alberta had one of the highest labour force participation rates for mothers, and the province was also unique in that lone-parent women actually participated *more* than married and common-law mothers with children under age 6 (73% compared to 68%).

And so what?

Labour force participation by mothers of young children increased dramatically over the last decades of the twentieth century. Between 1976 and 1998, participation rates for mothers with children under age 3 doubled from 32% to 64%. At the beginning of a new century, Canadian mothers and fathers continue to face the challenge of "bringing home the bacon" while also ensuring that their children are safe and well cared for while they're on the job.

37. Mothers and Fathers with Children under 15: Who's in the Labour Force? (1996)



37a. Labour Force Participation Rates of Mothers and Fathers With Children Under 15 years of Age, by province (1996)

	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
Lone-parent mothers with youngest child less than 6	55%	41%	71%	48%	61%	47%	58%	52%	53%	73%	54%	81%	66%
Wives with youngest child less than 6	69	65	83	69	71	67	71	69	71	68	68	74	67
Lone-parent mothers with youngest child 6-14	75	57	79	66	71	73	75	78	77	84	77	91	76
Wives with youngest child 6-14	79	70	84	75	75	75	80	83	85	82	79	89	80
Lone-parent fathers with youngest child under 6	83	77	93	84	88	81	83	83	81	90	84	100	89
Lone-parent fathers with youngest child 6-14	86	76	89	82	80	86	86	84	89	91	89	91	84
Husbands with youngest child 6-14	94	87	94	92	92	94	93	95	95	96	93	95	88
Husbands with youngest child less than 6	94	87	96	94	94	93	94	93	94	96	95	96	88

Husbands and wives include common-law partners.
Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, Nation Series, 93F0020XCB96004.

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38. Dual income... with kids

At century end, only one in five couples with children still living at home relied solely on the father's paycheque. In 1996, the earnings of both mothers and fathers supported seven out of ten married or common-law couples with children. Moreover, the same was true not only for those families with older children but also for two out of three couples with a child under age 6.

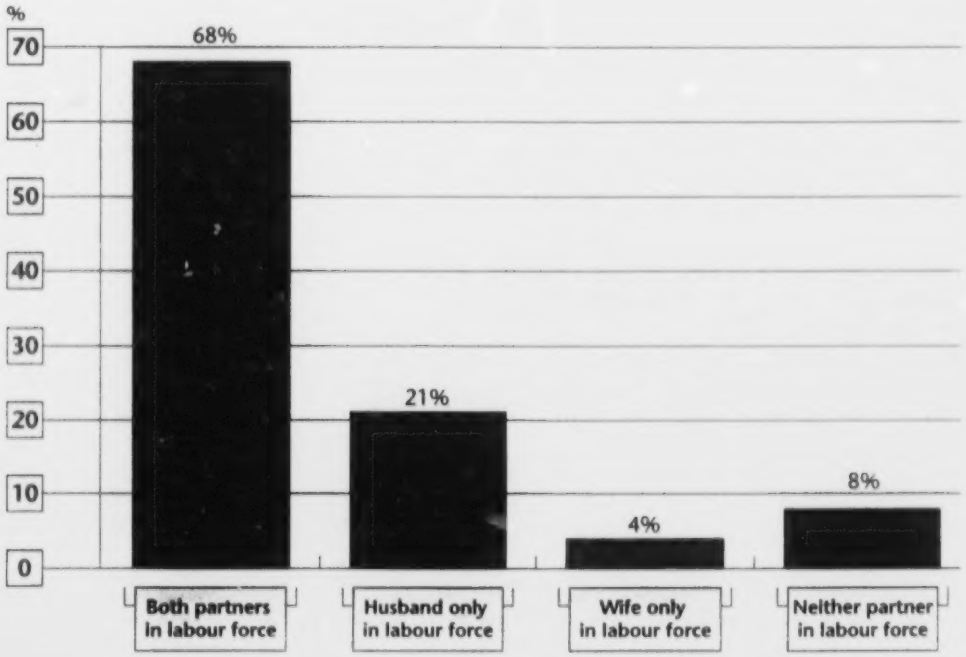
Both parents were employed for 30 or more hours per week over the course of the full year in approximately one third of all families with children under age 18. But not all parents in the labour force held full-time, full-year jobs. Other mothers and fathers were employed in part-time jobs or for only part of the year, whether or not by choice.

And so what?

Most families count on two wages to make ends meet, with the result that they face heavy demands on their time and energy. When both spouses work, the price paid by these dual earners may be high. Married mothers with full-time employment, especially those with children under the age of 5 are most stressed by lack of time. Mothers and fathers employed full time say that if they had more time, their first priority would be to spend more of it with friends and family.[1]

[1]Statistics Canada, *General Social Survey*, 1998.

38. Labour Force Status of Couples with Children, (1996)



Labour Force Status of Couples with Children, by province (1996)

	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
All couples	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Both partners in labour force	68	57	76	63	65	64	69	72	75	72	68	78	66
Husband only in labour force	21	23	14	24	21	24	20	18	17	21	21	16	20
Wife only in labour force	4	6	4	5	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	6
Neither partner in labour force	8	15	6	9	9	9	8	6	5	5	7	2	8

Labour force status measured for the week prior to Census day in May, 1996.
Couples include married and common-law partners with never-married children of any age living at home.

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series, CD-ROM, 93F0020XCB96004.

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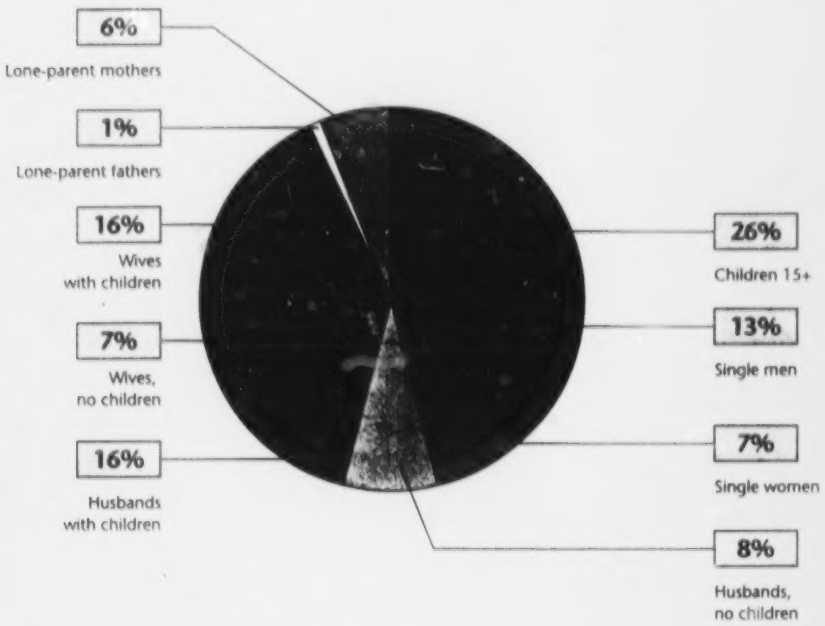
39. Who's looking for work?

39. Who are the Unemployed? (1996)



Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series, CD-ROM 93F0020XCB96004.

In 1996, the national unemployment rate was 10.1%. That is, 1.5 million people were actively looking for work. By 1999, it had fallen to 7.2%. Unemployed people came from a variety of family types. In 1996, nearly four out of ten were mothers and fathers with never-married children living at home (32% couples, 6% lone mothers, 1% lone fathers). Another 15% were married or common-law couples without children at home.

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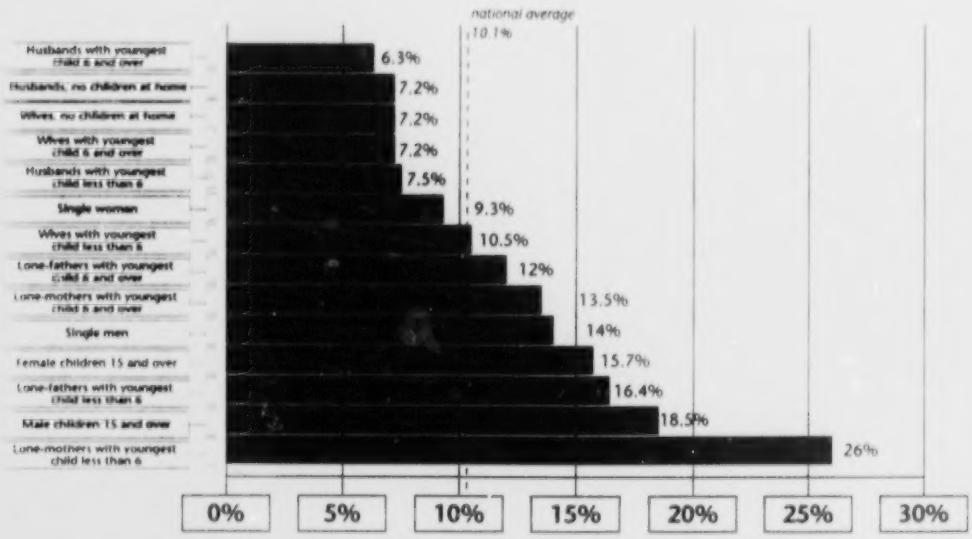
39a. Unemployment Rates by Family Status (1996[1])



[1]unemployment rate measured in the week prior to Census day in May, 1996.
Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series, CD-ROM, 93F0020XCB96004

Among the provinces, Newfoundland had the highest unemployment rates for all family member types. The lowest rates were in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba.

And so what?

Young parents and people with lower education have difficulty finding secure employment. Moreover, in addition to the people represented by these statistics, there are uncounted individuals who have stopped looking for work because they have concluded that there are no jobs in their communities for which they are qualified or which fit their family circumstances. Many of the unemployed who do eventually find jobs have to uproot their families and move away from family and friends.

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40. Just starting out and looking for work

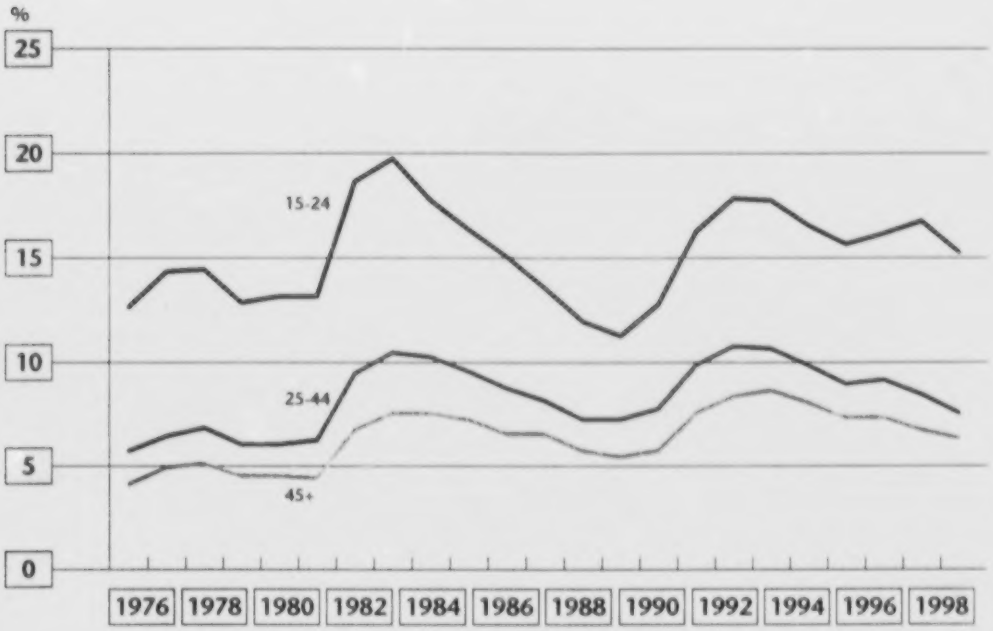
Age and marital status are related to the likelihood of having a job or not. Young people are more likely to be among the unemployed but young married people are more likely to have a job. In 1998, in the age group 15 to 24, 11% of married men and women were unemployed while 17.3% of single men and 14.4% of single women were without employment. The married people in this age group are, of course, likely to be the older ones.

More young people were unemployed during the recessions of the 80s and 90s, to a rate more than twice that of people aged 45 and over. By 1998, the employment situation had improved somewhat but at century end, roughly a third of all unemployed Canadians were young people aged 15 to 24. Nearly half of those without a job were between 25 and 44 years of age and the remaining almost one quarter were aged 45 and older.

And so what?

For most young Canadians, a secure job is a "must have" before starting a family of their own. To this end, many young people have pursued post-secondary education, putting off marriage until they have qualifications and jobs. Young Canadians most likely to marry may well be those who have already managed to find a secure job and are therefore able to take on the financial commitments that come with marriage. This is part of the reason why unemployment rates of young *married* men and women are lower than young *single* men and women.

40. Unemployment Rate by Age (1976–1998)



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Historical Review 1998, CD-ROM, 71F0004XCB.

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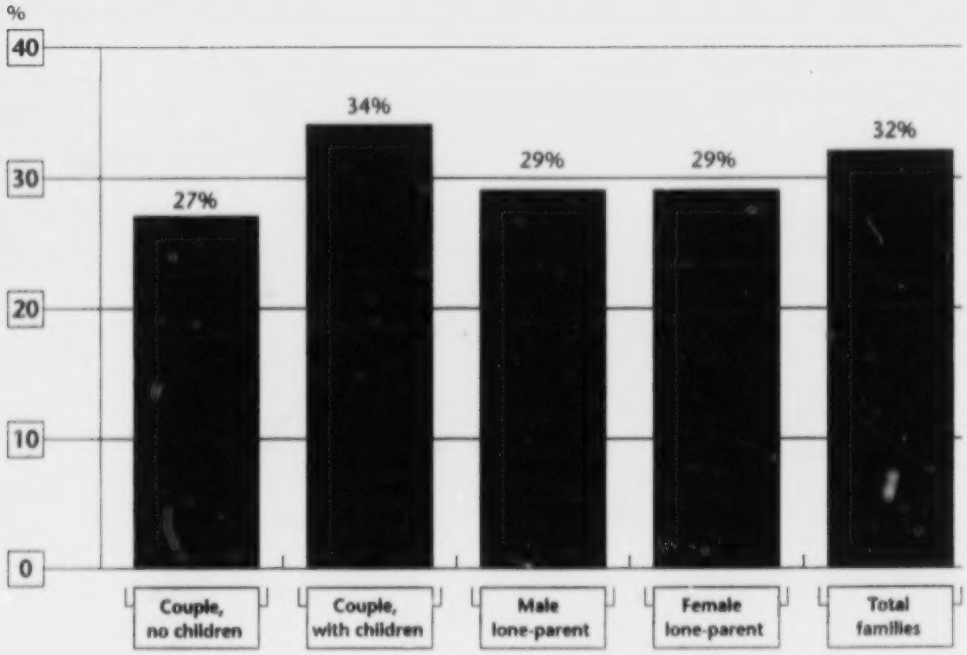
41. Families out of work

In 1995, unemployment affected almost one in three families (2.2 million families), as at least one family member could not find work at some time during that year. The situation was worse in the Atlantic Provinces, where nearly half the families had at least one member out of a job for part or all of the year. In Quebec too, a little more than one-third of families experienced unemployment over the course of the year.

And so what?

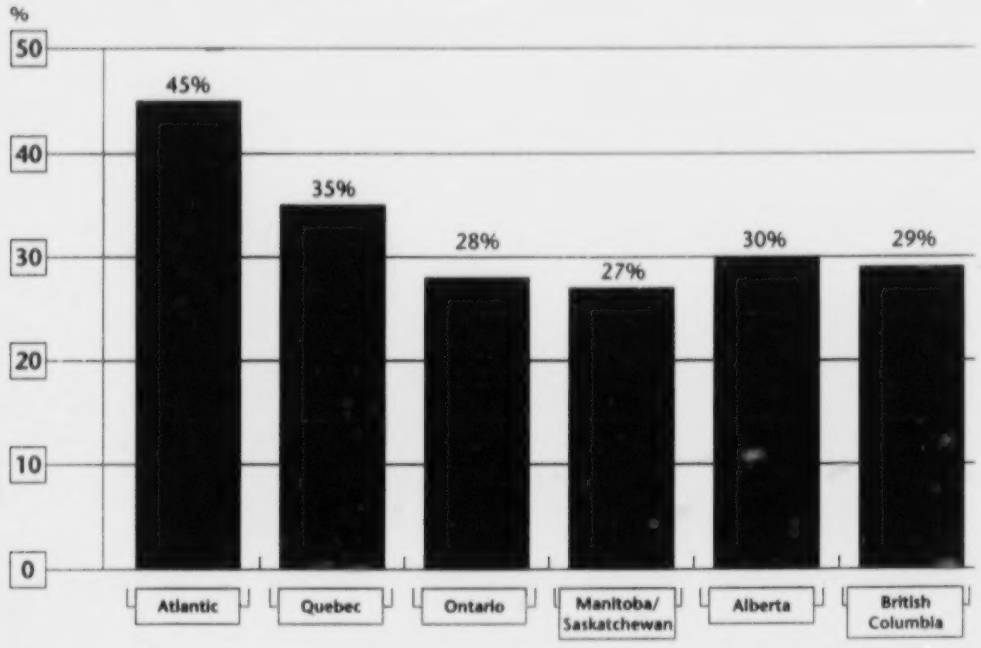
Unemployment figures rise and fall with the overall health of the economy. When the economy grows, individuals find jobs and families share the benefit. On the other hand, when the economy is weak, and people lose their jobs, entire families suffer. Even when one partner still has a job, unemployment strains the family budget and stresses family relationships, particularly when children are involved. In a region undergoing high unemployment, there is a cumulative effect on the economic, physical and psychological health of every family member.

41. Percentage of Families Experiencing Unemployment[1] (1995)



[1]At least one family member unemployed sometime during 1995.

Percentage of Families Experiencing Unemployment[1] by Region/Province (1995)



[1]At least one family member unemployed sometime during 1995.
Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Consumer Finances 1996, microdata file

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42. Who brings home the bacon?

At the close of the twentieth century, husbands were the sole earner in only 14% of all husband-wife families (with and without children). Both husband and wife had employment income in close to 60% of couples, up from 34% in 1967. In 20% of husband-wife families, children also earned money, often substantially increasing the overall income of their families.

Nearly nine out of ten high-income families (over $100,000 annual income) had two earners. The proportion was just under six out of ten among middle-income families ($40,000-$50,000). There were two earners in fewer than one in four families with incomes under $20,000.

And so what?

In 1951, at mid-century, fewer than three out of ten women held jobs in the paid labour force. At century end, approximately six out of ten do so. After World War II, married women were regarded as homemakers and child-rearers. Although some did earn wages, their incomes were generally regarded as secondary - simply supplementing the earnings of the male breadwinner. Fifty years later, women's wages are essential for most families to make ends meet.

42. Average and Median Incomes – Husband-Wife Families by Earners (1995)

	Average Family Income $	Median Family Income $
Husband, wife and child	85,501	77,207
Husband and wife	65,561	58,539
Husband and child	68,733	59,889
Husband only	47,993	40,437
Wife and child	57,690	52,907
Wife only	39,211	34,281
Child only	49,939	45,241
No employment income recipients	30,399	24,820
Total Husband-wife families	58,763	51,108

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series, CD-ROM, 93F00Z0XCB96004.

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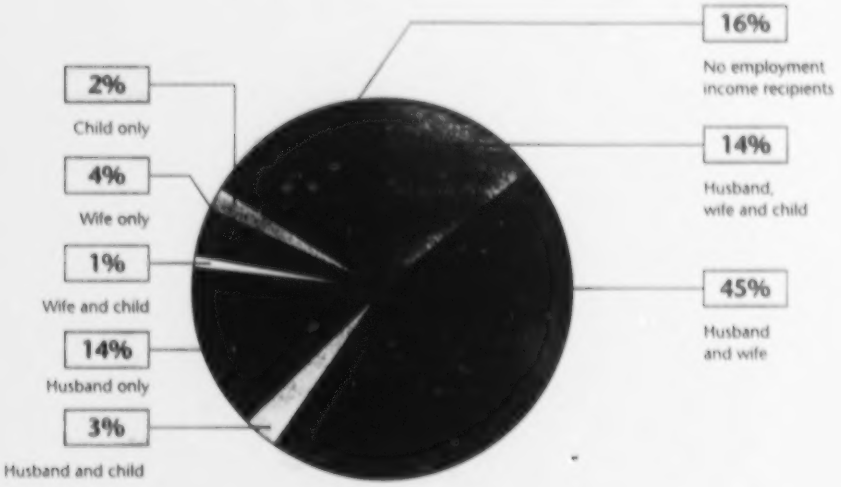
42a. Earners in Husband-Wife Families[1] (1995)



[1]Husband-wife families include married and common-law couples.

Earners in Husband-Wife Families by Province (1995)

	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
Husband, wife and child	14%	13%	20%	13%	14%	11%	15%	16%	16%	15%	13%	15%	15%
Husband and wife	45	36	45	42	43	44	45	47	48	52	47	63	59
Husband and child	3	5	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	3	3	0	3
Husband only	14	15	10	15	14	16	13	13	13	14	14	11	13
Wife and child	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
Wife only	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	1
Child only	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	0	0
No employment income recipients	16	20	14	17	17	17	16	16	14	11	17	5	4
Total Husband-wife families	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series, CD-ROM 93F0020XCB96004.

43. Lone-parents doing it all

Although the demands of raising and providing care to a child can make it difficult for lone-parents to obtain employment, six out of ten lone-parents did record employment earnings in 1995. Most often, the parent was the sole earner in the family (38%), but in one out of five lone-parent families, both the parent and the child (or children) had earnings. In 15% of lone-parent families, only the child or children had earnings from employment. One-quarter of all lone-parent families had no employment income.

More than eight out of ten lone-parents are mothers and about 60% of them with children under 16 were employed. Lone-parents were less likely to be employed when their children were young. Among lone-parent mothers with children under the age of 6, a little less than 50% held jobs. However, when their youngest children entered school, their labour force participation rate jumped to over 60%.

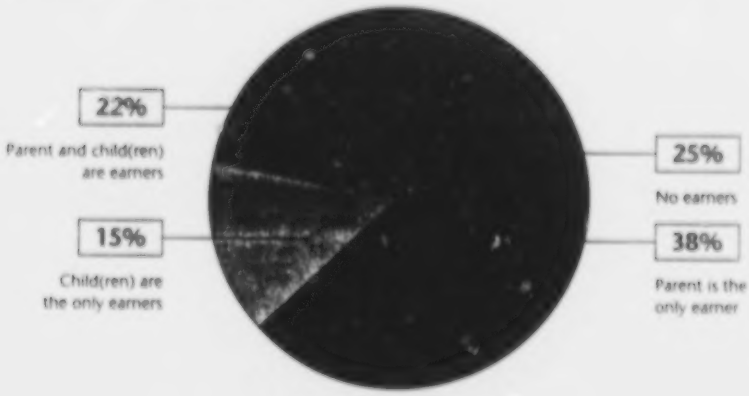
The number and combination of earners in lone-parent families varied considerably in relation to the ages of both the parents and the children. In families where the lone-parents were under 35 years of age and had young children, 40% had no earners and 60% had the parent as the sole earner. Among those lone-parent families in which the parent was 65 years of age or older and the children were actually never-married adults, 65% had the child as the sole earner. A little more than one in three lone-parent families with a parent between the ages of 35 and 64 achieved dual earner status through the combined earnings of the parent and child(ren).

And so what?

Most families at century end needed two incomes to make ends meet. But, this option is simply unavailable to many lone-parent families. Accordingly, many have a hard time providing adequately for themselves and their children. Lone-parents face the same challenges as couples with children—childcare and (increasingly) care for older family members. However, they do it on their own.

43. Earners in Lone-parent Families (1995)

Total number of lone-parent families = 1,134,000



Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Consumer Finances, Census Family (1995 income) microdata file

44. More than just 'pin money'

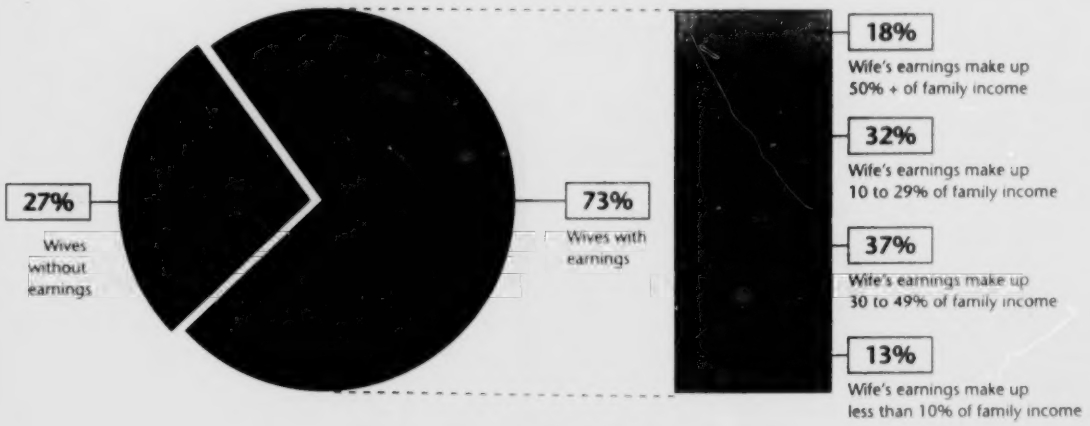
At mid-century, the assumption was that husbands should be sole supporters of their families, and in the vast majority of cases, the average family-man's job allowed him to do so.

In the late 90s, three out of four married women contributed financially to their families from paid employment. Close to one of every five women earned half, or more than half, of the total family income. More than a third earned between 30% and 49% of the family income, and another one third earned between 10% and 29%. While Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island had the highest proportion of wives with earnings, it was Newfoundland that recorded the highest proportion of wives contributing at least half (or more) of total family earnings from paid employment. Thirty-three percent of wives in Newfoundland did so. However, it was in Alberta that the highest proportion of wives contributed more than half of the total family income (which includes government transfers, investment income and pensions as well as wages and salaries).

And so what?

By the end of the century, if you were a woman under the age of 65, and were either married or living common-law, you were most likely working at a paid job, either full-time or part-time. In less than a lifetime, the so-called traditional breadwinner family in which many had grown up was replaced by the two-earner family. This most profound change carried with it economic, social and psychological challenges as Canadians came to think of marriage differently, and adapted to new patterns of decision-making, career planning, family planning and parenting.

44. Contribution of Wife's Earnings to Overall Family Income


27%
Wives without earnings
73%
Wives with earnings
18%
Wife's earnings make up 50% + of family income
32%
Wife's earnings make up 10 to 29% of family income
37%
Wife's earnings make up 30 to 49% of family income
13%
Wife's earnings make up less than 10% of family income

Contribution of Wife's Earnings to Overall Family Income by Region and Province

	< 10%	< 10-19%	20-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50% or more	Total
Atlantic	17.0%	19.5%	16.6%	15.9%	14.3%	16.7%	100.0%
Quebec	12.3	16.0	17.6	18.0	18.6	17.5	100.0
Ontario	13.1	13.8	16.0	19.6	19.4	18.1	100.0
Manitoba	13.2	14.8	19.4	19.6	17.3	15.7	100.0
Saskatchewan	13.0	16.1	18.0	17.7	17.6	17.6	100.0
Alberta	13.9	11.8	17.5	20.6	17.2	19.0	100.0
British Columbia	11.4	13.0	20.1	18.5	18.8	18.1	100.0
Canada	13.1	14.6	17.3	18.8	18.3	17.9	100.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Consumer Finances, 1995 (1994 income) microdata file.

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45. Four billion dollars of disposable income – teenagers and their jobs

In 1995, 1.8 million teenagers between the ages of 15 and 19 were living with their parents. Roughly half of them (960,000 or 53%) had jobs. Nearly eight out of ten older teens (aged 18-19) worked for average annual earnings of $5,582, and four out of ten younger teens (aged 15-17) earned an average of approximately $3,000.

And so what?

Collectively, teens earned more than $4 billion in 1995. In many cases, this money was discretionary spending power in the hands of a new generation. This purchasing power has not gone unnoticed by the producers and retailers of clothing, sports equipment, fast foods, electronic equipment and entertainment.

At the same time, most teenagers know that post-secondary education is a key to employment. Like their parents, many teens have to balance their current wants with the need to save for tomorrow. In most jurisdictions, tuition costs have risen dramatically in the past ten years and, along with their parents, teenagers struggle to put money aside to pay for tuition.

Juggling school and jobs can increase teens' stress but part-time employment can provide young people with both purchasing power, and for some, the ability to contribute to their families' income. In fact, in the case of lone-parent families, teenagers are sometimes the only source of employment earnings.

45. Average Earnings of Teenagers (Aged 15-19) with Employment Income, Living with parents (1995)

Age	Total Number of Youth Aged 15 – 19 Living in Parents' Household	Percentage with Employment Income	Average Earnings of those with Employment Income
15-17	1,185,300	41%	$2,972
18-19	625,900	75	$5,582
All (15-19)	1,811,200	53	$4,264

Source: Statistics Canada's Survey of Consumer Finances 1996 (1995 Income-Individuals).

Average Earnings of Teenagers (Aged 15-19) with Employment Income, Living with Parents, by province (1995)

Province	15-17	18-19	Total
Newfoundland	—	—	$3,153.54
Prince Edward Island	—	—	$3,253.06
Nova Scotia	$2,749.02	—	$2,960.12
New Brunswick	$2,384.46	$4,235.15	$3,279.00
Quebec	$3,025.84	$5,478.63	$4,364.80
Ontario	$3,163.67	$5,734.54	$4,464.11
Manitoba	$3,521.41	$5,889.59	$4,695.67
Saskatchewan	$3,303.72	—	$4,047.62
Alberta	$2,453.09	$5,582.92	$3,838.68
British Columbia	$2,474.00	$6,326.64	$4,305.21
Canada	$2,972.11	$5,581.91	$4,264.02

— Sample size too small to provide reliable estimate.
Source: Statistics Canada's Survey of Consumer Finances 1996 (1995 Income-Individuals).

46. Average family incomes

In 1997, the average family income in Canada was $55,628. Among the provinces, the average family income ranged from a high of $61,110 in Ontario to a low of $40,630 in Newfoundland. Yukon and the Northwest Territories claimed the highest family incomes at $63,765 and $63,583 respectively.

Canadians' average family income fell during the 90s by 4.4% from a high of $58,189 in 1990. The pain was not shared evenly. Manitoba remained constant, while the worst declines were in Nova Scotia (-10.9%), Newfoundland (-10.5%), British Columbia (-6.2%) and Quebec (-5.9%), all of which saw average incomes fall by more than $3,000.

And so what?

Average family income varies with the patterns of economic activity and costs of living in the different regions of Canada. Moreover, earnings and income do not fully measure families' economic circumstances and prospects. While incomes are highest in the industrialized centres of the country, some Canadians in rural and remote communities supplement their earnings with unpaid (and, therefore, unrecorded) work such as hunting, sewing, providing farm produce, fishing and wood cutting for themselves or their neighbours.

46. Average Family Income (1990 and 1997)

	(constant 1997 $)		Change from 1990 to 1997	
	1990	1997	$	%
Canada[1]	58,189	55,628	-2,561	-4.4
Newfoundland	45,380	40,630	-4,750	-10.5
Prince Edward Island	45,728	44,866	-862	-1.9
Nova Scotia	50,248	44,747	-5,501	-10.9
New Brunswick	47,470	45,428	-2,042	-4.3
Quebec	53,830	50,634	-3,196	-5.9
Ontario	63,752	61,110	-2,642	-4.1
Manitoba	53,396	53,690	294	0.6
Saskatchewan	50,404	49,695	-709	-1.4
Alberta	58,603	57,515	-1,088	-1.9
British Columbia	61,134	57,373	-3,761	-6.2
Yukon[2]	64,560	63,765	-795	-1.2
Northwest Territories[2]	64,285	63,583	-702	-1.1

[1]Canada average based on provinces only.
[2]Based on data from the Census of Canada. 1997 income is an estimate using 1995 income inflated to 1997 dollars.

Source: Statistics Canada, Family Incomes: Census Families 1997, Catalogue no. 13-208-XIB.
Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series, CD-ROM, 93F0020XCB96004.

47. Who's rich, who's not?

In 1997, the median family income of Canadian families was $48,862. In other words, half of Canada's families had incomes below this level and half enjoyed incomes above it. Over a quarter of Canadian families had incomes of less than $30,000, a third of families had incomes between $30,000 and $60,000, and over a third had incomes over $60,000.

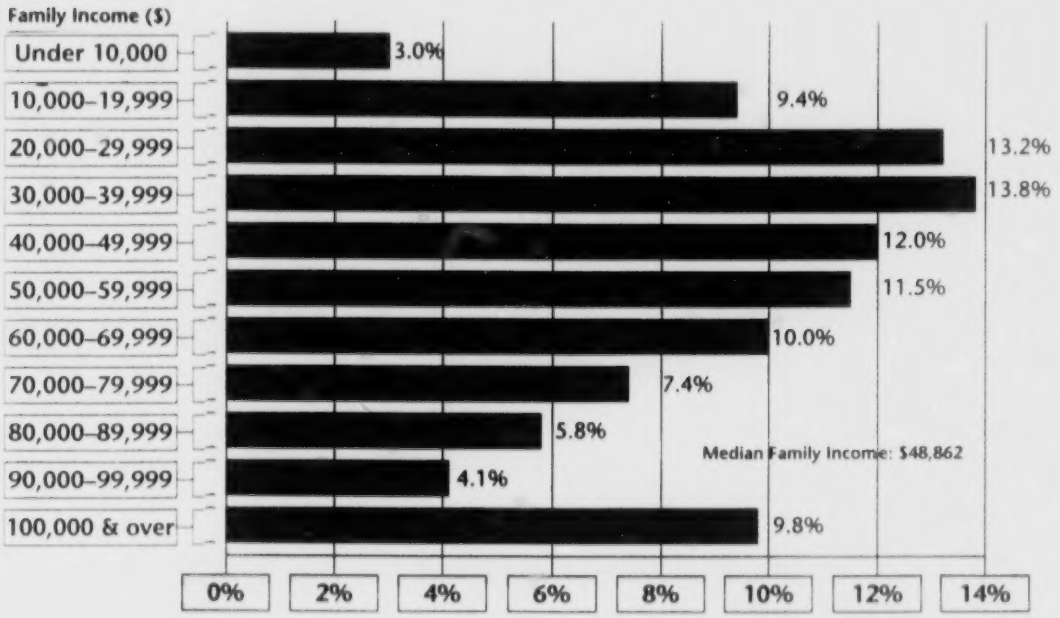
The Atlantic Provinces had the largest proportion of families with low incomes. In Newfoundland, 43% of families had incomes less than $30,000, whereas Ontario and Alberta had a much smaller proportion (22% and 21%) in this income group. These two provinces, along with British Columbia, had a relatively large share of families with incomes of $60,000 or more.

Even though Ontario accounts for only 38% of all Canadian families, it was home to half of all families earning over $100,000. While only one out of ten families in Canada had this level of income, fully 13.l% of Ontario families did so. British Columbia and Alberta were next at 10.7% and 10.5%. All other provinces were below the national average: Manitoba was 7.4% and Quebec was 7%. The province at the bottom of the scale was Prince Edward Island at 3%.

And so what?

Rich is a state of mind – and geography. Cost of living varies across Canada, as do salaries, expectations and lifestyles. Estimates of average incomes often conceal the actual circumstances of many families. Although the average income was $55,628 two thirds of all Canadian families have incomes between $20,000 and $80,000. One in five families can be found among the very wealthy or the very poor, with 12% living on less than $20,000 a year and 10% enjoying an income above $100,000.

47. Percentage Distribution of Families by Level of Family Income (1997)



Percentage Distribution of Families by Level of Family Income by province (1997)

Family Income ($)	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT[1]	NT[1]
Under 30,000	26%	43%	31%	34%	34%	30%	22%	25%	31%	21%	25%	21%	30%
30,000 to $9,999	37	38	49	42	42	38	36	40	39	40	35	33	24
60,000 and over	37	19	21	24	25	32	43	35	30	39	40	46	46

[1]Data from the 1996 Census, showing distribution of families by 1995 income.
Source: Statistics Canada, Family Incomes: Census Families 1997, Catalogue no. 13-208-XIB.
Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series, CD-ROM, 93F0020XCB96004.

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48. Family incomes falling behind

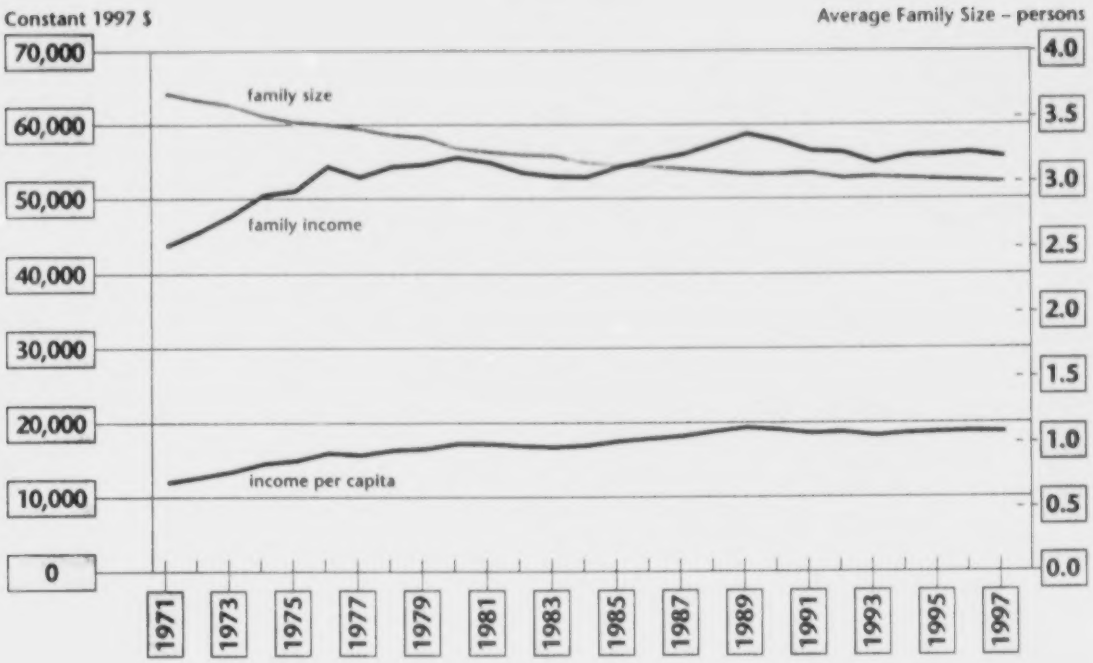
Between 1971 and 1997, average family income rose 27%—a significant increase. In 1971, the average family income (calculated in inflation-adjusted 1997 dollars) was $43,712. By 1989, the average had grown to $58,639. However, with a recession in the early 90s and a 3% decline in the Canadian Gross Domestic Product, average family income fell by $3,800 to $54,803 by 1993. While subsequent years saw renewed economic growth and declines in unemployment, the 1997 average family income of $55,628 in 1997 did not match the 1989 pre-recession high.

Earlier in the century, the average family income had to feed more mouths than it does today. In 1971, there were 3.67 family members on average, in comparison to 2.99 in 1997. Over that time, the average income per family member increased by 56% between 1971 and 1997 from $11,911 to $18,626.

And so what?

Of course, the negative effects of the recession in the 90s were not shared equally by all families. Neither the average dollar figures nor the changes in GDP speak of the hardship suffered by families hit by layoffs, cutbacks and job losses in the 90s. Many older people who lost their well-paid jobs in resource and manufacturing industries were unable to find comparable employment. Many younger people discovered that their entry level positions were hard to come by and often paid little. Recessions would be relatively painless if a 3% decline in GDP was spread across 100% of the population. As it is, a 3% decline is absorbed by the much smaller percentage of Canadians who lose their jobs.

48. Trends in Average Family Income, Per Capita Income and Family Size (1971-1997)



Source: Statistics Canada, Family Incomes Census Families 1997, Catalogue no. 13-208-XIB.

49. Winners and losers – family incomes by family type

Canadian families earned 90% of their incomes from wages and salaries. The remaining 10% came from a variety of sources such as investments, pensions, alimony and government transfer programs like the Canada Child Tax Benefit, Employment Insurance, social assistance, Old Age Security and the Canada/Quebec Pension Plan. Income-security programs kick in at times of economic difficulty such as job loss, accident, sickness or when raising children, and after retirement. On average, 27% of the income of lone-parent families comes from government transfers, as does 46% of the income of senior retired families.

At the end of the twentieth century, the average family income of lone mothers was $24,837. For lone-fathers the average was $38,101. Older families with the head aged 65 or older had, on average, $42,688. Among the non-elderly couples, those without children at home had $56,317 and those with children had the highest at $63,235.

Overall, Canadian family incomes rose in the 80s, but by the late 90s they dropped back to 1980 levels. One-earner families' incomes actually declined. Couples in which both adults were earning a pay cheque had a higher income in 1997; an average before- tax income of $66,299 as compared to an average of $45,696 when there was only one breadwinner. However, there were notable improvements for seniors, whose average incomes rose by $4,739, or 12.5%. Over the 80s, lone fathers recorded a substantial increase of $10,258, or 27%, but lost all these gains by 1997. The incomes of lone mothers increased by $2,417, or 10%, but fell back by about half that amount.

And so what?

Most families know that their total incomes are not equivalent to money in the bank. After taxes, families had $45,605 on average. The most affluent after taxes were the two-earner, two-parent families with an average of $52,007. Female lone parents fared the worst with an average of $22,493.[1]

One-earner families (either lone-parent or two-parent) are relatively economically disadvantaged in an economy based on two incomes per household. Not only do they earn less and have a lower overall income, they are also more vulnerable to economic swings because they lack the cushioning effect of a second income in the event of job loss. Improvements in retirement savings programs, as well as Canada's commitment to income security programs for seniors, have reduced economic hardship for many older families.

[1] Statistics Canada, *The Daily*, July 26, 1999.

49. Average Family Income[1] by Family Type, Selected Years

				1980 to 1997	
	1980	1989	1997	($) Change	(%)Change
All families	55,479	58,639	55,628	149	0.3
Elderly families[2]	37,949	43,462	42,688	4,739	12.5
Non-elderly families	57,886	61,117	57,992	106	0.2
Couples, no children	58,019	57,568	56,317	-1,702	-2.9
One earner	48,019	48,875	43,127	-4,892	-10.2
Two earner	64,376	63,612	64,872	496	0.8
Two-parent with children	60,153	65,571	63,235	3,082	5.1
One earner	46,304	50,462	45,696	-608	-1.3
Two earner	62,794	65,273	66,299	3,505	5.6
Three or more earners	79,548	83,786	80,224	676	0.8
Lone-parent males[3]	37,793	48,051	38,101	308	0.8
Lone-parent females[3]	23,753	26,170	24,837	1,084	4.6
No earners	10,458	13,557	12,883	2,425	23.2
One earner	23,849	27,062	27,923	4,074	17.1

[1]Income before tax, in constant 1997 dollars.
[2]Head 65 years of age and over.
[3]With never-married children under 18. Children 18 and over may also be present.

Source: Statistics Canada, Family Incomes: Census Families 1997, Catalogue no. 13-208-XIB.

50. How fares the middle class?

What is a middle-income family anyway? In 1997, the exact middle (or median) income was $48,862; one-half of all families had incomes below and one-half had incomes above this level. Surprisingly few families were within $5,000 each way from the middle. Only about 12% of families had incomes between $45,000 and $55,000. If the range is broadened to include incomes between $40,000 and $60,000, about one in four families occupied this middle income range.

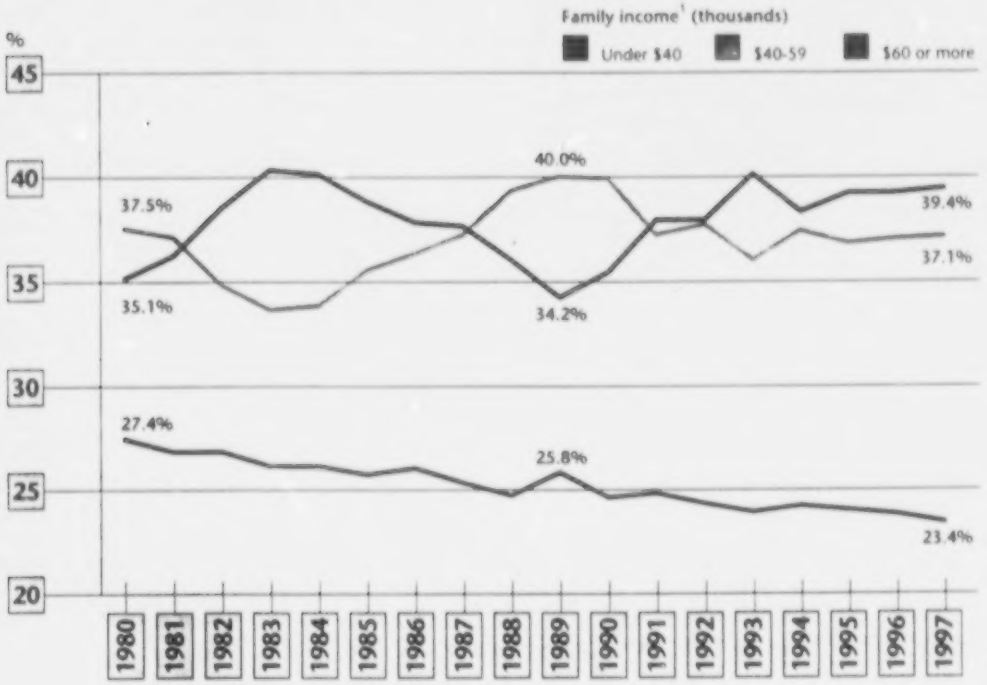
Over the last 20 years of the twentieth century, the proportion of middle-income families declined modestly but steadily. Over the last 20 years, the percentage of Canadians enjoying high incomes declined while the proportion with low incomes increased. After adjusting for inflation by using 1997 constant dollars as the basis for calculations, middle-income families accounted for 26% of all families at the time of the recession of 1983, and 24% at the time of the next recession in 1993. During the two recessions, the middle-income group lost membership as higher rates of unemployment took their toll.

By 1989, family incomes had reached a two-decade high thanks to relatively low levels of unemployment and several years of economic growth. In that year, the percentage of families with incomes below $40,000 dropped to 34%, while the share with incomes above $60,000 increased to 40%.

And so what?

During the recession of the early 90s, the proportion of families with incomes below $40,000 rose rapidly, and those with incomes above $60,000 fell. After 1995, the economy grew and unemployment fell again. This time around, however, the middle class did not recover; and the proportion of families with middle-incomes remained essentially unchanged.

50. Declining Share of "Middle Income" Families (1980-1997)



[1]In constant 1997 dollars

Source: Statistics Canada, Family Incomes: Census Families. Catalogue no. 13-208-XIB.

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51. Tough times for lone mothers

In the last years of the twentieth century, there were just over 1.1 million lone-parent families in Canada. About eight out of ten were led by women.

In 1970, lone mothers were more likely to be employed than married or common-law women. By the 90s the opposite was true. On average, the economic circumstances of lone mothers differed greatly from lone fathers. The average family income of female lone-parent families in 1995 was $27,721, or only 68% of the male lone-parent average of $40,974. Almost half of female lone-parent families had an annual income less than $20,000, compared to only a quarter of male lone-parent families.

At the other end of the scale, only 8% of lone-parent families led by women had incomes over $60,000, while the comparable figure was 19% for lone-parent families led by men. But because most lone-parent families were led by women, there was actually a higher number of female-led lone-parent families with incomes over $60,000: 74,000 female-led families, compared to 37,000 male-led families.

Roughly half of the women who received alimony or child support were lone-parent mothers. In 1988, the proportion of men below the poverty line after paying support was 16% while 66% of women with children who received support lived below the poverty line. When support was not paid, approximately 75% of women with children lived below the poverty line following divorce.

And so what?

In spite of initiatives such as the 1997 Federal Child Support Guidelines,* female lone-parents are most likely to be at an economic disadvantage. They are more likely to earn less than men, and to work at low-end jobs. Lone parents with younger children, who are in general most likely to be women, often face the problem of finding affordable childcare they can count on to upgrade their education and training or to take a job. Between the 1970s and 90s, the income gap between husband-wife families and lone-parent families increased because so many women in husband-wife families had joined the labour force.

* The federal government introduced the Federal Child Support Guidelines in 1997 to more equitably distribute the family's resources to provide for the children of divorce, and to create more consistency in the levels of child support. These guidelines establish amounts of child support for each province and territory. Amounts are based on a fixed percentage of parental income before taxes, the number of children for whom child support is being determined and the average cost of raising a child.

51. Male and Female Lone-parent Family Incomes (1995)

	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
% with income under $20,000													
Male lone-parent	26%	36%	30%	32%	35%	28%	24%	28%	30%	22%	25%	na	29%
Female Lone-parent	46	59	46	56	58	48	42	49	53	42	45	29	51
% with income $60,000+													
Male lone-parent	19	11	8	11	9	17	23	15	13	20	22	na	27
Female Lone-parent	8	4	4	4	3	6	10	6	5	7	8	12	12
Average income													
Male lone-parent	$40,974	$32,814	$34,211	$33,782	$32,407	$38,466	$44,318	$37,743	$35,978	$42,947	$43,138	na	$43,875
Female Lone-parent	$27,721	$21,989	$26,198	$22,336	$22,062	$26,157	$30,182	$25,462	$24,165	$28,226	$28,448	$34,291	$27,767

na = not available.

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series, CD-ROM, 93F0020XCB96004.

52. Family poverty persists

One commonly used measure of "poverty" in Canada is based on the low-income cut-offs (LICOs) produced annually by Statistics Canada. Families with incomes below these cut-offs are "substantially worse off than the average," and are living in "straightened economic circumstances." The cut-offs are adjusted for family size and size of local population to reflect variations in cost of living and expenditures. While not an official measure of poverty, LICOs are popularly interpreted and used as such.

In 1997, 14% of all Canadian families lived with low incomes. This was more than the 13% recorded in1980, and much more than the 11% in 1989.

Some family types fared worse than others. For example, 26% of two-parent families with a single earner were poor, which is more than double the overall rate of 12% for two-parent families. At the other end of the scale, only 7% of two-earner families and 4% of families with three or more earners could be classified as poor.

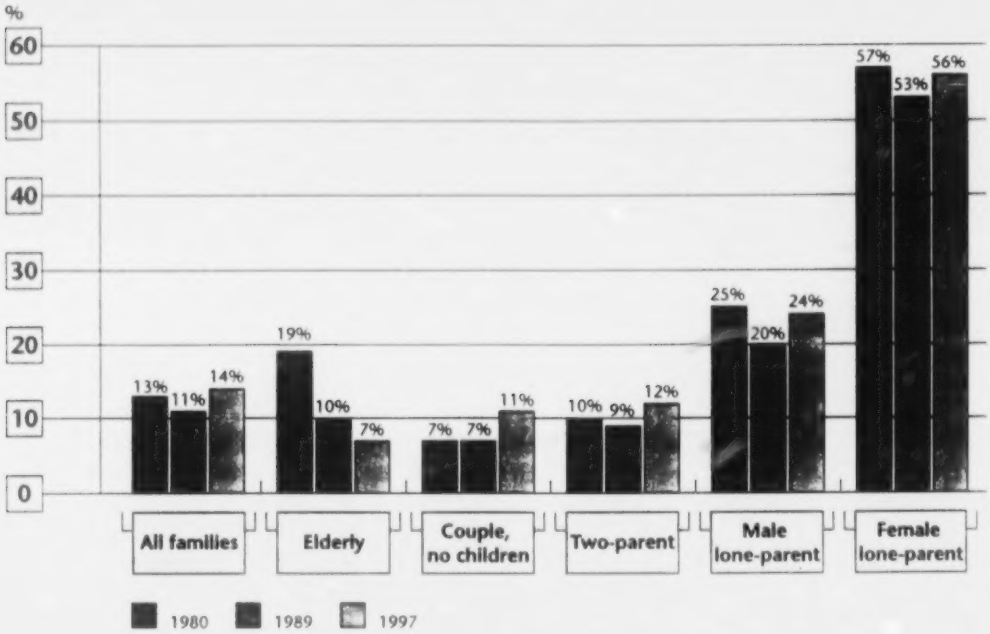
Lone-parent families with children under the age of 18 have much higher rates of poverty than two-parent families. Lone mothers experience poverty far more than lone fathers. In 1997 more than half (56%) of all lone mothers and their children were living "in straightened circumstances."

With only one exception, family poverty rates were persistently high over the last two decades of the twentieth century. Poverty declined markedly among elderly families because of improved income security programs and the Quebec and Canada Pension Plans. Even so, many widowed seniors (49% of widows and 33% of widowers) were still counted among the poor as the century ended.

And so what?

The unemployed, people with disabilities and lone-parents are most likely to receive social assistance or welfare. In one month in 1997, there were close to 1.5 million welfare cases in Canada and 2.8 million Canadians on income assistance. In other words, nearly one out of ten Canadians was living on an income well below the poverty line because they had lost a job, a spouse or their health.

52. Poverty Rates Among Canadian Families (1980, 1989 and 1997)



Notes: Poverty rates based on Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-offs (1992 base). Elderly families are those with head 65 years of age or older. Couples without children, two-parent and lone-parent families are non-elderly. Two-parent and lone-parent families restricted to those with at least one child under 18 living at home.

	1980	1989	1997
All families	13%	11%	14%
Elderly families	19	10	7
Non-elderly families	12	11	15
Couple, no children	7	7	11
One earner	12	10	14
Two earners	2	3	4
Couple, with children	10	9	12
One earner	17	20	26
Two earners	6	6	7
Three or more earners	4	2	4
Lone-parent families	53	49	51
Male lone-parent	25	20	24
Female lone-parent	57	53	56
No earner	96	95	96
One earner	49	44	43

Source: Statistics Canada, Low Income Persons, 1980 to 1997. Catalogue 13-569-XIB.

Poverty Rates Among Canadian Families, by Province (1997)

	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC
1980	23%	12%	14%	15%	17%	12%	13%	13%	11%	11%
1989	14	9	12	13	13	8	14	14	13	12
1997	18	9	15	14	15	13	15	13	13	14

Note: Poverty measured using Statistics Canada's low income cut-offs (1992 base). No information available for Yukon and NWT.
Source: Statistics Canada, Income Distributions by Size in Canada, 1997. Catalogue no. 13-207-XPB.

53. Too many poor kids in Canada

Children live in poverty because their mothers and fathers are poor. In 1997, 1.4 million Canadian children were living in poverty. Most children living with a lone mother were poor. Most poor children lived in two-parent families.

Six out of ten children living with lone mothers were poor. The share of poor children living in female lone-parent families increased considerably between 1980 and 1996, because an increasing share of all children live with lone mothers. Children in two-parent families fare much better with only 13.1% below the poverty line. Even so, in 1997, nearly one out of five children in Canada was poor.

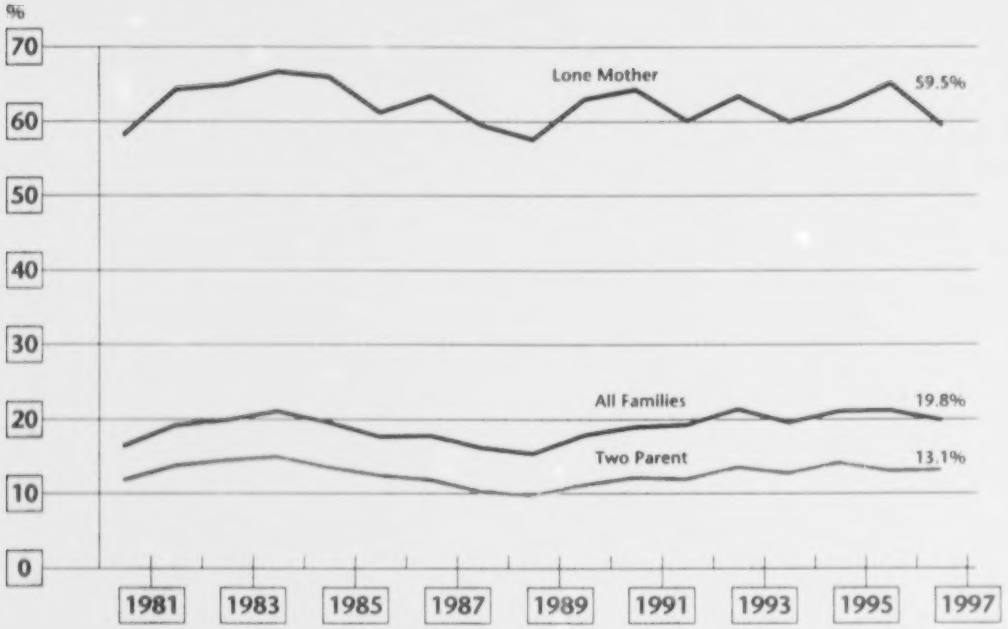
The number of poor children generally goes up and down in keeping with the ups and downs of the economy. In 1989, the number of poor children had fallen by 25% to 1.02 million from a high of 1.36 million in 1984. Unfortunately, the trend was short-lived. By 1993, there were almost one and a half million poor children. And, despite economic growth and declining unemployment since then, the number has remained at almost a million and a half. The child poverty rate remained stubbornly high at 19.8% in 1997, down from 21.1% in 1996.

And so what?

Child poverty rates reflect the overall state of the economy. However, they are also influenced by government policies and the levels of transfers provided by federal and provincial governments through such programs as Employment Insurance, social assistance, and the Canadian Child Tax Benefit, as well as the taxation system.

All Canadians eventually suffer the consequences of child poverty. The children themselves are obviously the most severely affected, but the future health of the economy and the vitality of communities rests on today's children and the nation's willingness to invest in them.

53. Child Poverty* Rates by Family Type, Canada (1997)



Child Poverty Rates, by Province (1997)

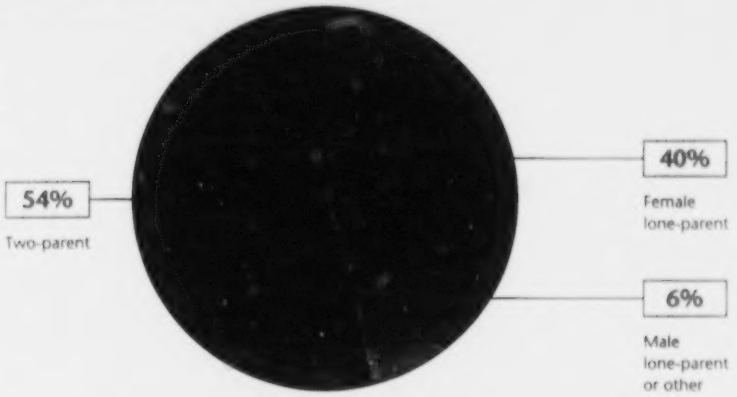
	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC
Poverty rate (%)	19.8	22.8	14.9	22.4	20.1	20.7	19.9	22.1	19.5	16.0	19.6
Number poor ('000)	1,397	30	5	48	34	340	538	60	50	117	174

*Poverty is measured using Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-offs.

Source: Statistics Canada, Low Income Persons, 1980 to 1997. Catalogue no. 13-569-XIB

53a. Poor* children by Family Type (1997)

1997 Total number of poor children under 18 = 1,397,000



Poor children by Family Type, by province (1997)

	Can	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC
Two-parent	54%	67%	na	48%	56%	52%	58%	50%	34%	53%	56%
Female lone-parent	40	27	na	48	35	42	38	47	60	44	36
Male lone-parent or other	6	7	na	4	9	6	5	3	6	3	9

na = not available, insufficient sample size

*Poverty is measured using Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-offs.

Source: Statistics Canada, Low Income Persons, 1980 to 1997. Catalogue no. 13-569-XIB.

At work you think of the children
you've left at home. At home you think
of the work you've left unfinished.
Such a struggle is unleashed.

Golda Meir (1990). Cited in *Today's Family: A Critical Focus*. Phyllis Meiklejohn, Annette Yaeger & Lenore Kurch (eds.). Toronto: Collier MacMillan Canada Inc., 21

54. How poor is poor? The poverty gap

In 1997, the Low Income Cut-offs or "poverty lines" ranged from $15,038 for a two-person family living in a rural area to $43,339 for a family of seven or more living in a metropolitan area (population 500,000 or more). The poverty line for a family of three persons—which was the average family size in 1997—ranged from $18,703 in a rural area to $27,063 in a large city like Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver.

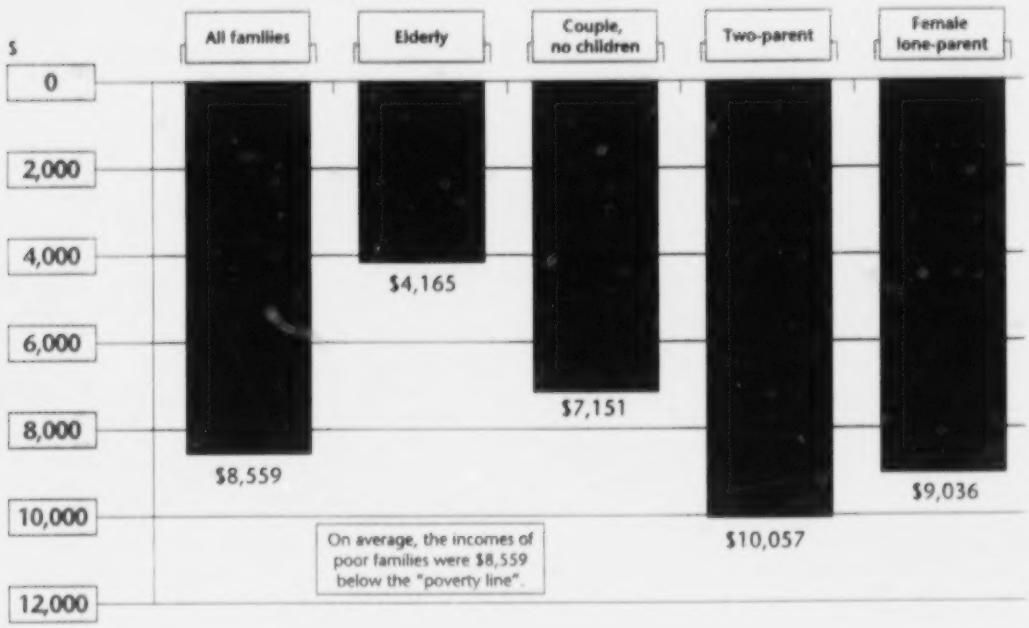
In 1997, on average, the incomes of poor families were $8,559 below the poverty line. For a poor family of three living in Toronto, this meant an annual income of $18,504. The gap between the low-income cut-offs and the average income of poor families was wider than at any time since 1980.

Just as the poverty rate is different for different types of families, so too is the poverty gap. Families with children have the greatest average gaps since the poverty lines are set higher for larger families.

And so what?

Ironically, most of Canada's poor would feel much better off if their incomes even came close to the so-called "poverty line". A poverty-level income would represent a substantial improvement in their incomes, in some cases more than doubling the incomes on which they live. In 1997, it would have taken $10 billion to raise the incomes of all Canada's poor families to the poverty line.

54. Depth of Poverty Shown as $ below "poverty line" by Family Type (1997)



Notes: Poverty gap based on Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-offs (1992 base). Elderly families are those with head 65 years of age or older. Couples without children, two-parent and lone-parent families are non-elderly. Two-parent and lone-parent families restricted to those with at least one child under 18 living at home.

Source: Statistics Canada, Low Income Persons, 1980 to 1997. Catalogue no. 13-569-XIB.

55. Many poor are employed but still struggling

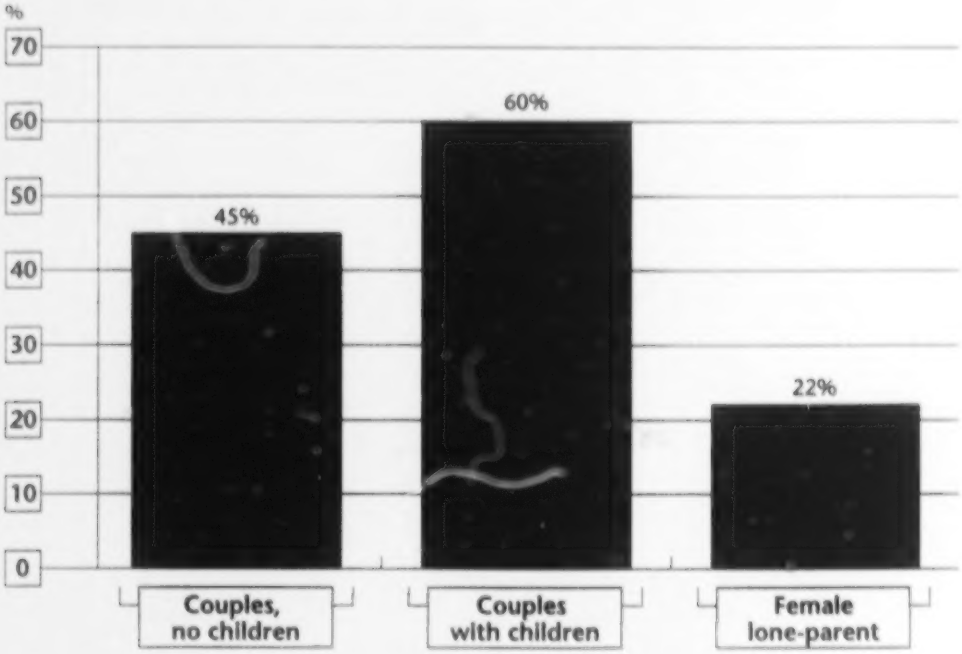
At the end of the 90s, many families lived in poverty, even though one or more of their members were employed. Among families whose members had 40 to 48 weeks of employment in 1996, more than one in four still fell below the poverty line. The families whose members work more weeks in the year have lower poverty rates. Only 3% of all families whose members had 93 or more weeks of employment in the year have family incomes below the poverty level.

According to the National Council of Welfare, about four out of ten non-elderly poor families in 1996 had 40 or more weeks of employment, which made them members of the "working poor". Canadian minimum wages ranged from about $5 to $7 per hour. At $7 per hour, someone working 40 hours per week for 52 weeks (i.e. with no statutory holidays or vacations) earned $14,560 in a year. This was higher than the poverty line for an individual in a rural area. For a single mother and one child in Vancouver, it was $7,210 short of their poverty line of $21,770. Even jobs paying more than a minimum wage were often inadequate from the family's point of view. A couple with two children depending on one earner making $12 per hour still fell below the poverty line if they lived in a large city.

And so what?

Paid work was the major source of these families' incomes, contrary to popular perceptions of the poor as totally dependent on social assistance or employment insurance. Among poor couples with children, six out of ten families received at least half their income from paid work.

55. Percentage of Poor Families Under 65 with at Least One-half of Total Income from Employment Earnings (1996)



Source: National Council of Welfare, Poverty Profile 1996. Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1998

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56. Got a job and still poor – but for how long?

About one third of Canadian families experienced a bout of unemployment in any one year, but for many, their episode of poverty was temporary.

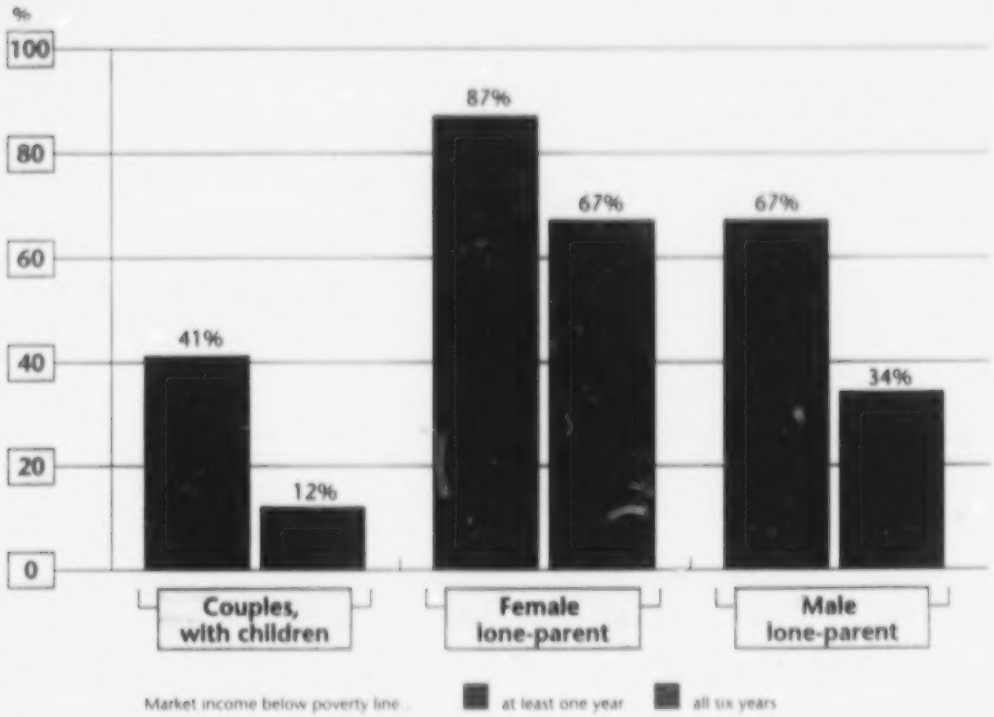
Between 1988 and 1993, almost half of all couples raising children experienced at least one year during which their income from paid employment or any other non-government source was below the poverty line. Nearly seven out of ten lone-parent families headed by men earned less than the poverty line for a year. It was even worse for lone-parent families headed by women: nearly nine out of ten had "market incomes" below poverty levels for at least one of the years. Nearly seven out of ten lone-parent families headed by women lived below the poverty line for all six years

And so what?

Rates of poverty coincide with economic cycles. In times of economic downturn, increasing numbers of unemployed Canadians are forced to depend on government income support programs such as employment insurance and social assistance. Rates of payment as well as rules of eligibility affect how much these families receive. Marriage, remarriage or co-habitation is often a path out of poverty, while separation or divorce often lead to poverty.

Families experiencing prolonged periods of poverty face great hardship and long-term dependency, both of which threaten the development and long-term prospects of their children.

56. Percentage of Families with Market Incomes Below the Poverty Line[1] (1988-1993)



[1]Market income refers to income before government transfer payments. Poverty line based on Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-off.
Source: Human Resources Development Canada, Applied Research Bulletin, Vol. 4, no.1, Winter-Spring 1998.

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57. Where did all the money go?

Canadian households spend a total of some $400 billion every year. All families spend money on food, clothing, and shelter, but how much they spend depends on the size of the family, the number of earners and how much they earn. It also depends on the age of the family members, where they live and—last but not least—whether or not they are raising children.

In 1996, $66,826 was the average income of all couples with children under age 15 (single-earner and dual-earner). That was well over twice the average income of $28,216 available to lone-parents with children of the same age.

Total income is not the same as "take- home" pay. After income taxes, union dues, Employment Insurance premiums, medical insurance and contributions to both government and private pension plans, couples with children under age 15 were left, on average, with a little less than $50,000 with which to pay for their bills. Lone-parents had on average half that amount: approximately $23,000.

Couples with children under the age of 15 spent, on average, more than half of their disposable income on the basic necessities: food, clothing and shelter. Lone parents spent close to three-quarters.

Couples with children spent more than $15 out of every $100 on transportation: purchasing, insuring and maintaining the family car(s) and buying public transit tokens or passes. Because lone-parent families are less likely to own an automobile, their transportation costs represent a smaller proportion of monthly budgets, but still account for $11 out of every $100 they spend.

How much families spent depended on how much they earned. Higher-income families spent more on the goods and services they purchased, but they also had more money left over at the end of the month. Although they spent more than lower-income or middle-income families for practically all items, their regular expenditures took a smaller bite out of their monthly disposable incomes. One third of families with the lowest incomes spend about one out of every four dollars on food, the third of families with the highest incomes spend about one out of every eight dollars on food.

The wealthiest families spent, on average, about $1,655/month on shelter,* middle-income families spent close to $1,185 and lower-income families averaged about $825. Even so, the wealthy spent only about one out of every four dollars paying for running their homes, while those with middle incomes spent about one in every three dollars and the lower-income group spent close to one out of every two dollars paying for their rents, mortgages and household expenses.

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57. Family Expenditures by Income Class, All Families with Children Under 15 years of age (1996)

	One third of families with lowest incomes		One third of families with middle incomes		One third of families with highest incomes	
Income range	<$41,500		$41,500 - $67,300		>$67,300	
Average income before tax	$24,915		$53,882		$101,620	
Income tax	$2,164		$10,187		$26,574	
Income tax as % of total income	9%		19%		26%	
Disposable income						
annual	$21,823		$40,443		$69,694	
monthly	$1,819		$3,370		$5,808	
Monthly Expenditures	**Amount ($)**	**% of disposable income**	**Amount ($)**	**% of disposable income**	**Amount ($)**	**% of disposable income**
Food	$414	22.8%	$600	17.8%	$756	13.0%
Clothing	$118	6.5	$209	6.2	$347	6.0
Shelter						
principal accommodation	$590	32.5	$792	23.5	$990	17.0
operation and furnishings and other accommodation	$233	12.8	$392	11.6	$665	11.5
Transportation	$289	15.9	$544	16.1	$876	15.1
Health and personal care	$104	5.7	$173	5.1	$229	3.9
Reading and education	$39	2.2	$69	2.0	$140	2.4
Recreation	$123	6.8	$265	7.9	$451	7.8
Cigarettes and alcohol	$67	3.7	$93	2.8	$108	1.9
Lottery tickets	$10	0.6	$18	0.5	$18	0.3
Gifts and donations	$55	3.0	$116	3.4	$215	3.7
Life insurance	$19	1.1	$41	1.2	$73	1.3
Interest on personal loans	$25	1.4	$49	1.5	$58	1.0
Other Miscellaneous	$1	0.1	$9	0.3	$5	0.1
Total	$2,087	114.7%	$3,372	100%	$4,931	84.9%
Money left at the end of the month	$-268	-14.7%	$-2	0.0%	$877	15.1%

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Family Expenditures, 1996 microdata file.

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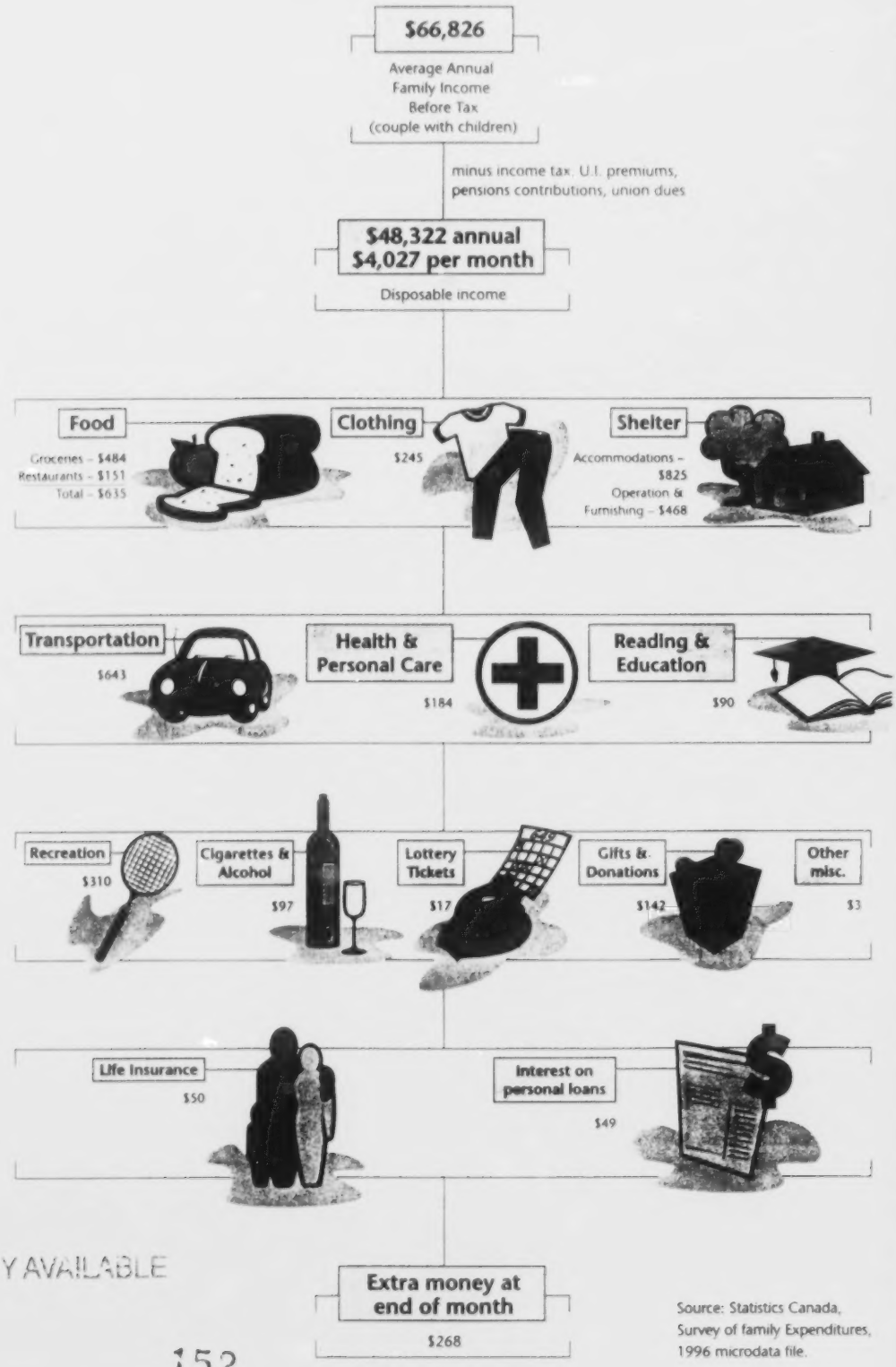
57a. Average Monthly Expenditures, Couples with Children under 15 years (1996)



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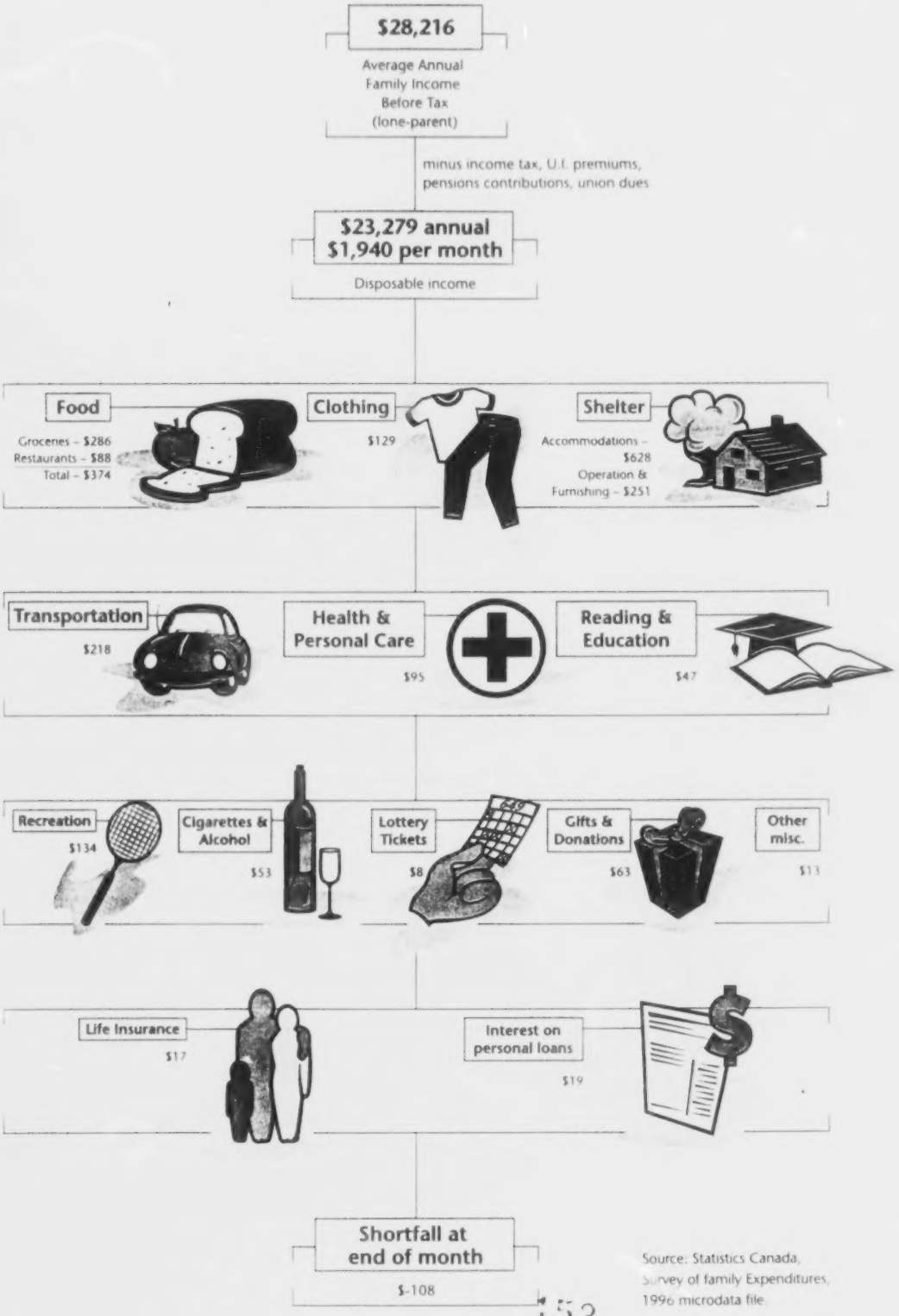
Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of family Expenditures, 1996 microdata file.

57b. Average Monthly Expenditures, Lone-parent Families with Children under 15 years (1996)



Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of family Expenditures, 1996 microdata file.

And so what?

With average monthly expenditures exceeding average incomes by about $108 per month many lone-parent mothers have to cut back significantly on the necessities of life to avoid falling deeply into debt. Even families in the middle, with incomes between approximately $41,000 and $67,000, just manage to balance the books. Only the high-income families are able to put something aside.

Even if expenditures on recreation, cigarettes, alcohol and lottery tickets are considered luxuries, lower-income families have only $200 of this kind of discretionary spending to cut back on, compared with the $376 spent by the middle-income group and the $577 spent by the wealthiest.

Anyone with a son or daughter finishing high school knows that the costs of children do not magically end at age 16 as do the statistics. Tuition fees alone for post-secondary education increased by fully 119% between 1985/86 and 1993/94. While struggling to make ends meet, most families also try to balance the day-to-day expenses with the long-term need to save for the education of their children and their own retirements.

*Shelter cost includes accommodation plus supplies, utilities and furnishings

...whereas in earlier generations women typically bore their children over a period of ten to fifteen years, today they do so in five years or less....women will spend more years alone with their spouses than in the company of children: the opposite of what most married women have experienced in the past century and a half—perhaps for most of human history.

Charles Jones, Lorna Marsden and Lorne Tepperman (1990) *Lives of Their Own: The Individualization of Women's Lives*. Toronto: Oxford University Press: 168

58. Who owns the family home?

At the end of the century, there were 6.7 million one-family households in Canada. Roughly a third of them had fully paid for the homes where they lived. Typically, these were people older than age 50. Homeowners paying down a mortgage accounted for two out of five households. The remaining almost one-third paid rent.

Residents of the Northwest Territories were the most likely to rent their homes. In 1995, 56% did so, compared to only about 20% of Canadians living in the Atlantic Provinces. Average rents ranged from $510 in Newfoundland to $773 in British Columbia. In Newfoundland, almost half of the families owned their homes outright without a mortgage, compared to only 17% in the Northwest Territories, 27% in Yukon and 29% in Quebec. Average mortgage payments ranged from $490 in Newfoundland, to $918 in Ontario, with the most expensive mortgage payments in the Northwest Territories at $1,057 per month.

The measure of housing affordability used by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation suggests that households should spend no more than 30% of their total income on shelter. However, more than a third of renters and almost a quarter of households with mortgages paid more than the target figure. Even worse off were the 8.3% of households with mortgages whose shelter costs exceeded 50% of their income, and 18.5% of renters in the same position.

And so what?

In the 1950s, suburbia came into its own with an explosion of homebuilding to accommodate the large families into which the baby-boomers were born. The design of the houses and neighbourhoods reflected the hopes and aspirations of a generation intent on more space, more privacy, and double garages in which to park the family car. A six-bedroom bungalow just outside one of Canada's growing cities could be purchased for $12,000. Today, the average price of a home ranges from about $71,000 in Newfoundland to a high of $240,000 in British Columbia.

Even so, owning a home is still an aspiration for most Canadian families. Paying for that home is the challenge. The price of homes, especially in the large cities, increased dramatically over the last decades of this century, making it difficult for young families to enter the housing market. Home owners have seen the value of their investment increase, but their wealth in equity does not make it any easier to meet their mortgage payments.

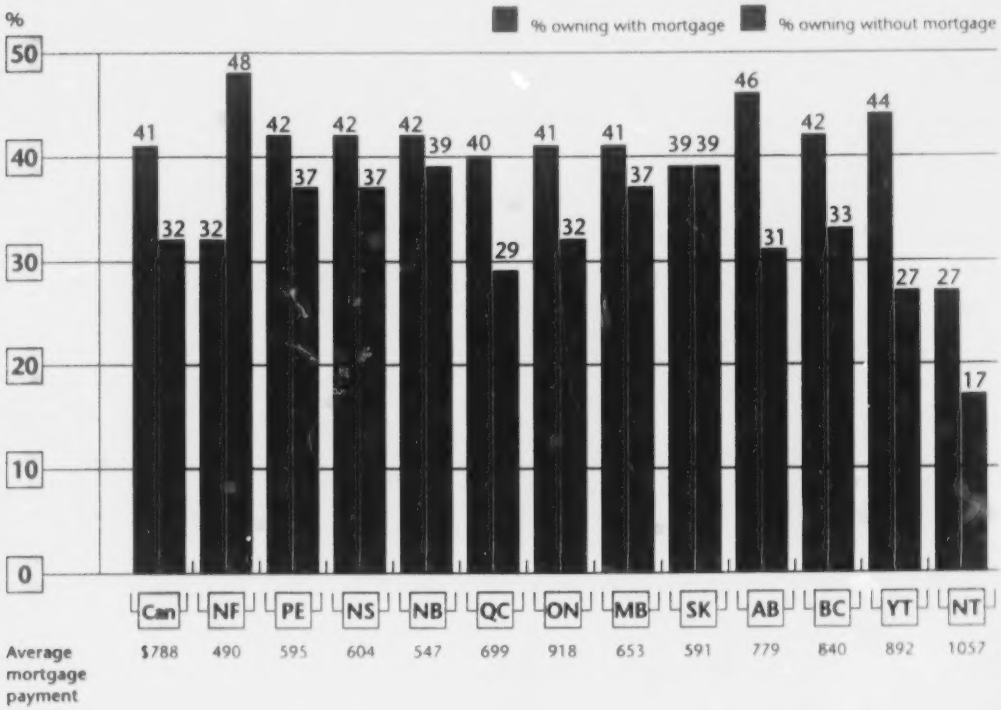
58. Family Households* by Tenure (1996)

total one-family households: 6.7 million
27%
Renters
38% of renters have gross rental costs totaling 30% or more of their household income**
41%
Owners with mortgage
23% of those with mortgages have shelter costs totaling 30% or more of their household income**
32%
Owners without a mortgage

*One-family households in tenant or owner occupied non-farm, non-reserve dwellings.
** 1995 household income before tax.

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series, CD-ROM, 93F0020XCB96004.

58a. Percentage of Family Households Owning their Home (1995)



Source: Private Households in Owner-occupied Private Non-farm, Non-reserve Dwellings by Household Type (4) and Household Income (15), Showing Gross Rent (13), for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 1996 Census (20% Sample Data).

59. Children are priceless and a little pricey too!

According to Manitoba Agriculture, parents could expect to spend close to $154,000 on rearing a child to age 18 (based on 1998 prices for basic goods and services). Boys cost $154,267 while girls were a bargain at $153,458. These were estimates, not actual expenditures. Some families simply did not have incomes sufficient to spend this much on their children.

Some families used childcare services and others did not. For those parents who counted on childcare services to enable them to study or work outside the home supplemental childcare accounted for fully one third of expenditures. Almost a quarter of the costs were for shelter, furnishings and household operation. Almost a fifth was for food, and one tenth was for clothing. Thanks to some economies (including hand-me-down clothes and furniture), second and third children did not cost quite as much. While these estimates were specific to Manitoba, factors such as government transfers and subsidies varied among provinces, territories and especially between cities and rural areas. As well, the costs of post-secondary education were not considered.

And so what?

The typical middle-income couple with one child counts on two pay cheques and spends about 15% of everything they earn to feed, clothe, house, educate and care for their son or daughter. If the child has a brother or sister, almost a quarter of the gross family income is spent on the children. Families with three or more children invest almost a third of their pre-tax incomes providing for them. Ultimately, though, neither the costs nor the benefits of parenting can be measured in dollars.

59. The Cost of Raising a Child

Cost of Raising a Boy to Age 18*

Age	$ Food	$ Clothing	$ Health Care	$ Personal Care	Recreation, Reading, Gifts, School Needs $	$ Trans-portation	$ Child Care	$ Shelter, Furnishings, Household Operation	$ Total
Infant	1,368	1,695	220	0	0	0	4,363	1,924	9,569
1	694	439	220	90	416	0	5,936	1,996	9,817
2	736	446	220	90	416	0	4,988	1,961	8,856
3	736	446	293	90	416	0	4,988	1,926	8,894
4	985	466	293	90	416	0	4,988	1,926	9,162
5	985	466	293	90	514	44	4,988	1,926	9,305
6	985	587	293	90	604	44	3,626	1,926	8,155
7	1,177	587	293	87	832	44	3,626	1,926	8,570
8	1,177	587	293	87	832	44	3,626	1,926	8,570
9	1,177	625	293	87	832	44	3,626	1,926	8,609
10	1,457	625	293	87	832	44	3,626	1,926	8,889
11	1,457	625	293	87	832	44	3,626	1,926	8,889
12	1,457	1,127	308	157	836	393	0	1,926	6,204
13	1,703	1,127	308	157	836	393	0	1,926	6,450
14	1,703	1,127	308	157	945	393	0	1,926	6,559
15	1,703	1,073	308	228	1,133	393	0	1,926	6,763
16	1,964	1,073	308	228	1,133	393	0	1,926	7,025
17	1,964	1,073	308	228	1,133	393	0	1,926	7,025
18	1,964	1,073	308	228	1,065	393	0	1,926	6,956
Total	$25,392	$15,270	$5,448	$2,354	$14,020	$3,060	$52,029	$36,697	$154,270

Cost of Raising a Girl to Age 18*

Age	$ Food	$ Clothing	$ Health Care	$ Personal Care	Recreation, Reading, Gifts, School Needs $	$ Trans-portation	$ Child Care	$ Shelter, Furnishings, Household Operation	$ Total
Infant	1,368	1,695	220	0	0	0	4,363	1,924	9,569
1	694	505	220	90	416	0	5,963	1,996	9,884
2	736	499	220	90	416	0	4,988	1,961	8,909
3	736	499	293	90	416	0	4,988	1,926	8,947
4	985	525	293	90	416	0	4,988	1,926	9,221
5	985	525	293	90	514	44	4,988	1,926	9,364
6	985	681	293	87	604	44	3,626	1,926	8,246
7	1,136	681	293	87	832	44	3,626	1,926	8,624
8	1,136	681	293	87	832	44	3,626	1,926	8,624
9	1,136	712	293	87	832	44	3,626	1,926	8,655
10	1,347	712	293	87	832	44	3,626	1,926	8,866
11	1,347	712	293	87	832	44	0	1,926	8,866
12	1,347	1,178	308	258	836	393	0	1,926	6,246
13	1,443	1,178	308	258	836	393	0	1,926	6,342
14	1,443	1,178	308	258	945	393	0	1,926	6,451
15	1,443	1,209	308	325	1,133	393	0	1,926	6,737
16	1,366	1,209	308	325	1,133	393	0	1,926	6,660
17	1,366	1,209	308	325	1,133	393	0	1,926	6,660
18	1,366	1,209	308	325	1,065	393	0	1,926	6,591
Total	$22,364	$16,801	$5,448	$3,046	$14,020	$3,059	$52,029	$36,697	$153,464

*These projections are based on Budget Guides 1999 data and do not include inflation.
Source: Fact Sheet Family Living Costs 1999, Home Economics Section, Manitoba Agriculture.

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60. Living for today or saving for tomorrow?

As the 90s drew to a close, 54% of all Canadian families felt that it was difficult to make ends meet. According to an Angus Reid poll taken in 1998, this was an increase from the 38% who thought so in 1989. Statistics confirm the apprehensions revealed in that poll.

During the 80s and 90s, Canadians' debt load increased dramatically from 56% to 101% of total disposable after-tax annual income. Mortgage debt increased most: from 38% to 72% of disposable income. Consumer debt (goods) increased from 19% to 29% of disposable income. At the same time, the savings rate declined from 19% to an unprecedented low of only 2% by 1998.

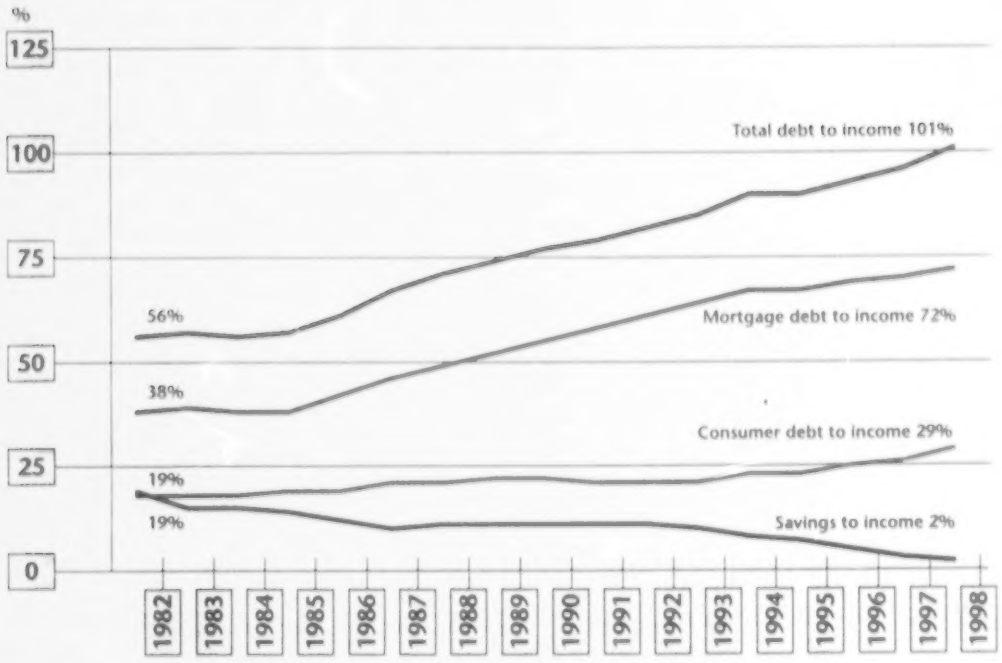
It is therefore not surprising that only one-quarter of households with working-age adults thought they could sustain themselves for more than 6 months if they had to rely only on their savings. Three in ten families thought that they could last only one month.[1]

And so what?

Debt has increased, but in many cases, so has the net worth and assets of Canadian families. Consequently, it is not clear whether Canadians are better or worse off than they were ten or fifteen years ago. Clearly many Canadians are financing their present purchases on credit, long-term debt and foregone savings. Even if families are, on average, wealthier today than in the past, it is the families at the upper economic levels and those who are older and already established that feel most secure about the future. Younger families and those of more modest means find it increasingly difficult to put money aside for a rainy day.

[1]Canadian Council on Social Development, *Personal Security Index 1999*, (1999)

60. Savings and Debt as a Percentage of Disposable Income* (1982-1998)



*Disposable income refers to annual income after income-tax.

Source: Statistics Canada, National Income and Expenditure Accounts and Bank of Canada, Canadian Monetary and Credit Aggregates and Interest Rates, 1986 to 1998.

61. Working for love or money

There are two labour forces in Canada. One is the paid labour force made up of the employed, the self-employed and those looking for work. The other is the unpaid labour force to which almost everyone belongs, at least to some degree. Unpaid labour involves preparing meals, doing laundry, shopping, housekeeping, yard work and so on. Almost everyone has to do some of these tasks for his or her own benefit, and many people do them for their family members as well. Unpaid labour also includes child and elder care, which ranges from intensive work such as feeding, washing and cleaning, to more pleasurable activities such as reading, talking and providing companionship.

On average, men worked less and women more at *unpaid* work while men worked more and women worked less at paid work. Single men did the least unpaid and the most paid work. Mothers with children under aged 6 (including lone mothers, wives and common-law spouses) did the least paid and the most unpaid work.

Canadian family members spend 20 billion hours doing housework each year. Women did two-thirds of this unpaid household work. Together, women's and men's unpaid work has been valued at a total of $197 billion, even when estimated at the (admittedly low) wage rates of personal service occupations in the labour market. In terms of the hours they devote to housework, family members are doing the equivalent of 10 million full-time jobs when working around the home. In comparison, there are 13.7 million conventional jobs in Canada.

Families received 65% of paid earnings from men, 35% from women. Conversely, women contributed 65% of the value of household work to their families with men contributing the other 35%.

And so what?

Although Statistics Canada only began to include unpaid labour in the 1996 census, it is clear that in the 80s and 90s, men (particularly husbands and lone fathers with children) did more unpaid work such as housework, child and elder care than was the case earlier in the century. However, women at the end of the twentieth century were still more likely than men to be involved in all the different kinds of unpaid labour. They did more housekeeping, child and elder care, whether they were single or married, mothers or childless.

Because most household work is not done for money, its importance and value tends to be forgotten in most economic calculations. Statistics Canada's efforts to quantify both the amount and value of housework illustrates that the real economy is more than just dollars and cents.

61. The Monetary Value of Unpaid Household Work (1992) and Paid Employment (1996) by Family Members Aged 15 years and Over

	Females[4]	Males[5]	Total
Annual hours spent on work (billions)			
Unpaid household labour[1]	13.2	6.9	20.1
Paid employment[2]	8.1	11.8	19.9
Unpaid and paid combined	21.3	18.7	40.0
Full-time full year job equivalents[3] (millions)			
Unpaid household labour[1]	6.7	3.5	10.3
Paid employment[2]	4.1	6.0	10.1
Unpaid and paid combined	10.8	9.5	20.4
Value of work in constant 1996 dollars ($billions)			
Unpaid household labour[1]	$129.3	$68.1	$197.4
Paid employment[2]	$127.0	$237.0	$363.9
Unpaid and paid combined	$256.3	$305.1	$561.3
Distribution of value of work (%)			
Unpaid household labour[1]	65%	35%	100%
Paid employment[2]	35%	65%	100%
Unpaid and paid combined	46%	54%	100%

[1]Household work includes domestic labour such as cleaning, laundry and home maintenance, help and care provided to family members, household management and shopping. The valuation of unpaid work is based on the "replacement costs, generalist approach", which uses the actual earnings of personal service occupations to estimate all forms of household work except child care, which is valued using child care occupations. Hours of household work based on 1992 General Social Survey. For details and methodology refer to source publication: Statistics Canada, "Households' Unpaid Work: Measurement and Valuation". Catalogue 13-603E, 1995.

[2]Includes self-employment. The monetary value of paid employment based on total aggregated annual earnings in 1996.

[3]Calculated by dividing total aggregate hours of work by 1,960 hours (40 hours/week for 49 weeks).

[4]Includes married and common-law women, lone-parent mothers and female children aged 15 and over living at home.

[5]Includes married and common-law men, lone-parent fathers and male children aged 15 and over living at home.

Source: Statistics Canada's Survey of Consumer Finances microdata file (1996 income).

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61a. Participation in Unpaid Labour[1], by Type of Activity and Family Status (1996)

	Housework[2]	Childcare[3]	Senior care[4]
Mothers with children under 15 years			
Wives[5] with youngest child 6 – 14	98%	92%	27%
Wives with youngest child less than 6	98	97	18
Lone-mothers with youngest child 6 – 14	98	91	22
Lone-mothers with youngest child less than 6	97	93	15
Fathers with children under 15 years			
Husbands[5] with youngest child less than 6	93	93	13
Husbands[5] with youngest child 6 – 14	91	85	20
Lone-fathers with youngest child 6 – 14	93	86	15
Lone-fathers with youngest child less than 6	92	87	13
Mothers and fathers with children 15 and over			
Wives with youngest child 15 and over	96	42	26
Lone-mothers with youngest child 15 and over	93	36	20
Husbands with youngest child 15 and over	87	32	18
Lone-fathers with youngest child 15 and over	87	31	13
Women and men without children			
Wives, no children at home	94	17	20
Female children age 15 and over	83	23	13
Single women	86	15	15
Husbands, no children at home	86	12	14
Single men	82	13	10
Male children age 15 and over	73	14	10

[1]Refers to individuals who spent at least some time doing unpaid housework, childcare, or providing assistance to seniors in the week prior to the day in which the Census was carried out (May 5 to May 11, 1996). It includes work done for family and household members as well as friends and relatives outside the household. It does not measure participation over the course of the entire year.

[2]Unpaid housework includes such things as preparing meals, doing laundry, household planning, shopping, yardwork or home maintenance.

[3]Childcare includes such things as bathing, playing with children, driving children to sports activities and helping them with their homework.

[4]Care or assistance to seniors includes providing personal care, visiting seniors, talking with them on the telephone, helping them with shopping, banking or taking medication.

[5]Husbands and wives include male and female common-law partners.

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series, CD-ROM, 93F0020XCB96004.

In the presence of grandparents and grandchildren, the past and the future merge in the present.

Margaret Mead (1990). Cited in *Today's Family: A Critical Focus*. Phyllis Meiklejohn, Annette Yeager and Lenore Kurch (eds.). Toronto: Collier MacMillan Canada Inc.: 149

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62. Wives and mothers doing double duty

Statistics Canada counts a job as full-time when it takes 30 hours a week or more. This means that about one in five wives and lone mothers has two full-time jobs: one a formal, paid job and the other composed of housework and child care. Their paid and unpaid work each took at least 30 hours a week for a total of more than 60 hours.

Men were three times less likely to do double duty: only one out of seventeen had full-time jobs and also did 30 or more hours of housekeeping and child care each week.

For most Canadians, running a household was at least the equivalent of a significant part-time job. More than half of all women spent at least 15 hours per week at unpaid labour as did more than one third of men.

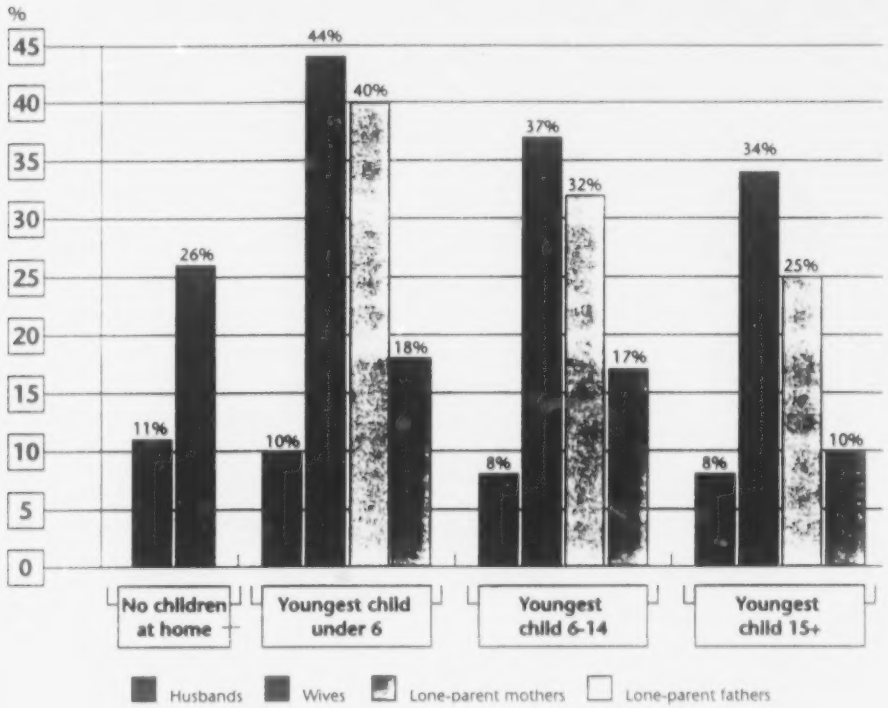
Having children increases housework. Nearly half of all married women with a child under age 6 did 30+ hours of housekeeping in a week. While women's workload increased with children, men's share altered only slightly. Among married and common-law men without children, 11% did at least 30 hours of housework, virtually the same proportion as married men with children at 10%.

And so what?

When women combine jobs and family responsibilities, something has to give. The evidence is clear: the more hours that women spend on the job, the fewer hours they spend on unpaid work and vice versa.

Although these statistics were collected for the first time in 1996, there is some evidence that more young men are beginning to take on an increasing share of housekeeping and childcare duties. Even so, men have a long way to go before they catch up with their wives who still do by far the greatest share of housekeeping, even when they are also working in the paid labour force.

62. Percentage of Husbands and Wives Doing 30 or More Hours of Unpaid Housework per Week, by Age of Children (1996)



Notes: Husbands and wives include men and women living common-law. Hours of unpaid housework as reported for the week prior to Census day in 1996. Housework includes such things as meal preparation, laundry, shopping, household planning, yardwork and home maintenance.

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series, CD-ROM, 93F0020XCB96004

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63. Who worked part-time in Canadian families?

Family status and gender significantly influenced whether a person worked part-time or full-time for pay. Women were more likely to work part-time than men, and mothers in particular were most likely to do so.

The highest rate of part-time work was among teens and youth. Among them, 47% worked at jobs for less than 30 hours per week (41% of young men and 55% of young women). Most of them also attended school, college or university.

Four out of ten employed mothers with preschool children worked part-time, as did another three out of ten mothers with children over age six. Almost one in four single women worked part-time, as compared to one in six single men.

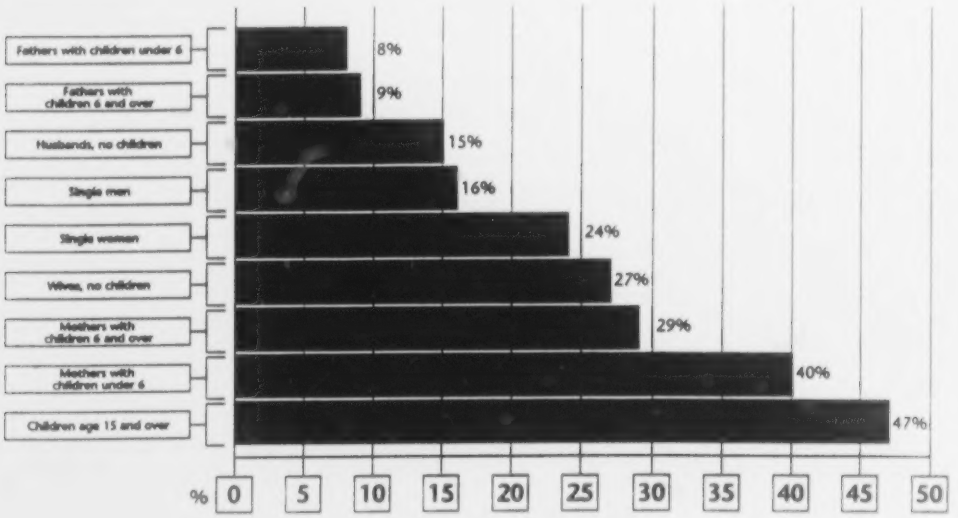
Husbands and fathers were the least likely to work part-time. Nine out of ten husbands with children worked full-time, while a slightly smaller number of husbands without children worked full-time.

And so what?

Since the late 70s, the proportion of women who are employed increased dramatically. For example, among mothers with a child under the age of three, the percentage holding jobs more than doubled between 1976 and 1998, from 26% to 59%. Mothers with children living at home account for one in three part-timers.

The share of those mothers working part-time hours changed only very slightly, from 35 % in 1976 to 32% in 1998. For men and women in the labour force, the need to earn two incomes to support their families is obvious. For many families, part-time jobs are a strategy used to balance the competing demands of earning and making a home. Many other families would prefer to work full-time, but find that only part-time work is available to them.

63. Who is most likely to have part-time[1] employment? (1996[2])



[1]Percentage of the employed working less than 30 hours per week.
[2]All figures are for the week prior to Census day in May of 1996.

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series, CD-ROM, 93F0020XCB96004

64. Canadians working with and for others

In addition to the jobs they do as employees, Canadians also contribute their time, energy and skills as unpaid volunteers. Volunteer work is essential to our communities and sustains our schools, sports and recreational activities, libraries, charities, and local organizations.

Collectively, Canada's 7.5 million volunteers contributed 1.1 billion hours of their time in 1997. Their unpaid work to benefit their communities was the equivalent of 578,000 full-time, full-year jobs. While the number of volunteers and the total number of volunteer hours increased by 9% between 1987 and 1997, the average amount of time donated by each volunteer declined from 191 to 149 hours per year. About three of every four volunteers said they would volunteer even more were it not for lack of time, the demands of their paid jobs, and their family responsibilities.

The difference between male and female volunteer rates was small and growing smaller: by 1997, 54% of volunteers were women and 46% men. Another change that took place in the 90s was that young people volunteered more. Their volunteering rate doubled from 18% to 33%.

In 1997, one in four seniors aged 55 or over offered their services through voluntary organizations. Over 64% of seniors volunteered informally on their own. Visiting the sick or elderly, shopping or driving for others and childcare were the most popular informal volunteer activities.

Three out of ten Canadians participated in some kind of volunteer work. The provinces with the highest rates were Saskatchewan (47%), Manitoba and Alberta (40%). The province with the lowest level of volunteerism was Quebec (22%).

And so what?

Despite all the pressures of time and money, many family members make time to strengthen the communities in which they live. Increasingly, young people expect that volunteering will enhance their chances of getting a job. Parents frequently volunteer to lead, coach or help out in activities in which their own children are involved. However, most volunteers state that they are motivated simply by a desire to help others, and that they derive an important sense of self-worth from volunteering.

64. Volunteering in Canada, Selected Characteristics (1997)

Number of volunteers aged 15 and over	
Canada	7,471,513
Newfoundland	150,006
Prince Edward Island	38,437
Nova Scotia	283,255
New Brunswick	207,966
Quebec	1,313,146
Ontario	2,890,052
Manitoba	343,755
Saskatchewan	360,649
Alberta	878,267
British Columbia	1,005,980
Average time volunteering (annual)	149 hrs
Total volunteer hours (annual)	1.11 billion hrs
Volunteer participation rates by age	
All ages	31%
15-24	33
25-34	28
35-44	37
45-54	35
55-64	30
65 and over	23
Volunteer participation rates by sex	
Male	29%
Female	33
Volunteer participation rates by marital status	
Married or common-law	33%
Never married	31
Widowed, separated, divorced	25
Volunteer participation rates by labour force status	
Employed full-time	32%
Employed part-time	44
Unemployed	29
Not in the labour force	27

Source: Statistics Canada's, *Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians: Highlights from the 1997 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating*, Cat.#71-542-XIE

CANADA'S FAMILIES— HOW THEY FEEL

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Vanier Institute of the Family

65.75 Weeks on the job per year to make ends meet

In 1996, it took about a year and a half or 75.4 weeks on the job at an average wage, to earn enough to cover the typical annual expenditures of a family* on such items as: food, shelter, clothing, taxes, life insurance, gifts, health and personal care, interest on loans, union dues, recreation, cigarettes, alcohol and lottery tickets.

Dividing all families into low, middle and high income groups, those at the bottom of the income scale needed 67.5 weeks of employment at their average earnings to pay for the basics (not including vacations or personal savings). Those at the top of the scale needed to be on the job even longer to pay for a premium brand lifestyle. The middle third of families got by on 79.8 weeks of employment.

And so what?

Clearly, most earners are not holding down two full-time jobs. These estimates simply demonstrate the number of weeks of employment that would be required by a typical or average earner with no other sources of family income. However, most families count on two earners. Families at the low end of the economic spectrum fell far short, and had to rely on social assistance and employment insurance benefits. Even the middle and upper income families relied on other sources of income, including government transfers and investment income.

It takes a lot of money to provide for a family. In recent years, the time it takes to earn that money has increased substantially, and many families today find it hard to juggle the often competing demands of jobs and home.

*The 75.4 weeks of employment is calculated by dividing what families spend on living expenses over the course of the year by the average individual weekly earnings of mothers and fathers with children under 15 years of age.

65. Weeks of Employment Required for Family Expenditures by Income Group, Families with Children under 15 years of age (1996)

	All families	One third of families with lowest incomes	One third of families with middle incomes	One third of families with highest incomes
Average individual weekly earnings of all mothers and fathers in families with children under 15*	$766	$417	$675	$1,110
Person-weeks of employment required for annual expenditures on...				
Income tax	17.0	5.2	15.1	23.9
CPP/QPP, EPPS, union and professional dues	4.2	2.2	4.8	4.8
Food	9.2	11.9	10.7	8.2
Clothing	3.5	3.4	3.7	3.8
Shelter				
Accommodation	12.4	17.0	14.1	10.7
Operations and furnishings	6.7	6.7	7.0	7.2
Transportation	8.9	8.3	9.7	9.5
Health and personal care	2.6	3.0	3.1	2.5
Reading and education	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.5
Recreation	4.4	3.5	4.7	4.9
Cigarettes and alcohol	1.4	1.9	1.7	1.2
Lottery tickets	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2
Gifts and donations	2.0	1.6	2.1	2.3
Life insurance	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.8
Interest on personal loans	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.6
Other miscellaneous	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1
Total weeks	**75.4**	**67.5**	**79.8**	**82.1**

*Includes earnings from wages, salaries and self-employment, among both full-time and part-time workers.
Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Family Expenditures, 1996 microdata file.

66. Jobs plus family equals stress

In the 90s, the proportion of time-stressed Canadians increased from 16% to 21% of women over the age of 15 and from 12% to 16% of men. In 1998, the people most likely to be crunched for time were between the ages of 25 and 44. More than half of them worried that they did not spend enough time with their family and friends.

In the 70s and 80s, women reported high levels of stress because of demands on their time. However, between 1992 and 1998 the number of men reporting this kind of stress increased. One in four men and women in their prime childbearing and child-rearing years were severely time-stressed.*

Women aged 25-44 holding full-time jobs and raising children were the most likely to be severely stressed for time. A little more than one third of mothers—married or lone-parent—struggled with the competing demands of jobs and families. In comparison, one quarter of fathers employed full-time was stressed for the same reasons. Employed mothers with pre-school aged children were even more likely to be time-stressed.

Among those employed full-time, 85% of married mothers and 79% of married fathers said that weekdays were simply too short to do everything they set out to accomplish.

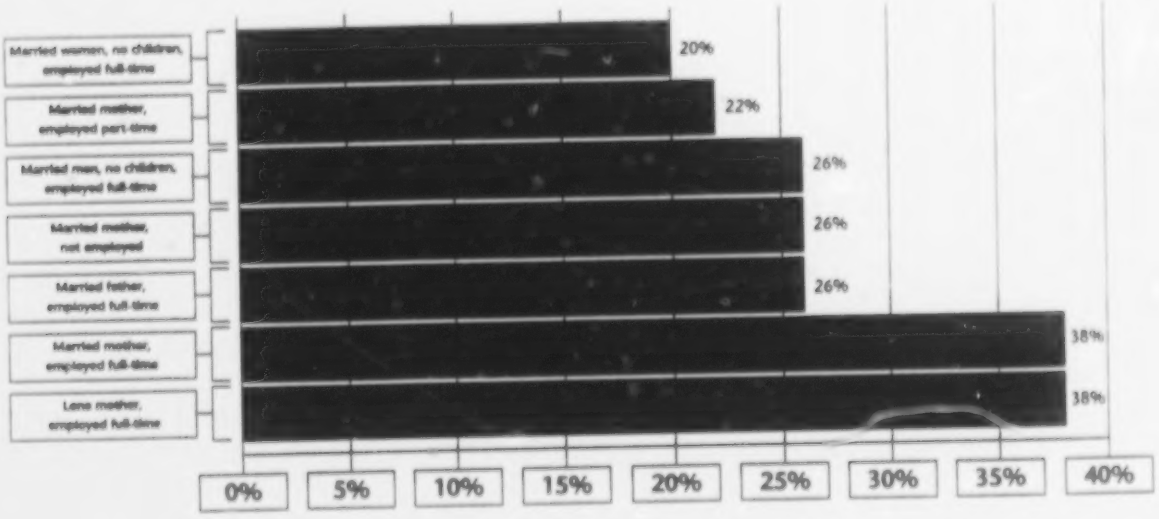
And so what?

Stress occasioned by conflicts between work and family responsibilities extracts a cost – from families, employers and their communities. Demands of the workplace often spill over into personal and family time to jeopardize not just the amount but also the quality of time spent with loved ones. Most recent estimates suggest that work and family conflicts cost employers at least $2.7 billion per year because of family-related absences from work. Stressed employees took an average of 13.2 days off to deal with family-related problems in comparison to the 5.9 days typical of those who report low levels of work and family conflict. Health care costs that arise from this stress, amounted to at least another $425 million annually for extra trips to doctors.[1]

* "Severe time stress" is a concept developed and measured by Statistics Canada, based on people's perceptions of time.

[1] Duxbury and Higgins report to Health Canada (reported in *The Globe and Mail*, June 4, 1999- Margot Gibb-Clark, "Work v Family: The $2.7 billion crisis.")

66. Time Stress Among 25-44 Year-Old Women and Men (1998)



Source: Statistics Canada, *The Daily*, November 9, 1999

67. Families on the run

Work—on the job and around the house—took about one third of a week for Canadians between the ages 35-54. Sleep took another third. Watching television was the next most time-consuming activity in the last third, which also included eating, community work and socializing.

Men and women spent about the same amount of time each week providing for themselves and their families. Men, on average, spent more time at their paid jobs, while women spent more time on household work.

Men and women who are employed work an average workday of more than eight hours long (8.8 for men and 7.7 for women). Almost one hour (50 minutes) of that workday is spent commuting – simply getting to the job and back home again.

Parents—lone and married—employed full-time, devoted the largest proportion of the week to paid and unpaid work and had the least amount of leisure time. Wives and mothers did more of the unpaid work essential to making a home, but over the last quarter century, husbands and fathers spent more and more time on childcare and home maintenance. Even so, men consistently enjoyed more leisure time than did women in all family situations and at different ages.

And so what?

"There just never seems to be enough time!" This lament was heard often as Canadians approached the end of the century. Descriptions of family life often spoke of a "time crunch," or mothers and fathers "stressed" for time, the "juggling act," and a "time famine." Most wives and mothers split their time between earning a wage and running the house. Men, women and children alike organized their lives around schedules designed to get as much done as quickly as possible. Beepers and cell phones, fax machines and the Internet meant they were "on call" most of the time. Home cooked meals and sit-down suppers became special occasions for many.

Many parents at the end of the century felt they were not living up to their own ideals of family togetherness. They often felt guilty on the job for not spending enough time with their families; they also felt guilty about not keeping up as employees.

67. Average Time Spent per Week on Various Activities, Population 15 and Over and Selected Age Groups (1998)

[redacted]	Population aged 15+		Population aged 35-44		Population aged 45-54	
[redacted]	Males (hours per week)	Females (hours per week)	Males (hours per week)	Females (hours per week)	Males (hours per week)	Females (hours per week)
Total paid work & related activities	31.5	19.6	43.4	26.6	40.6	26.6
Paid work	28.7	17.5	39.2	23.8	36.4	23.8
Activities related to paid work	0.7	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.7	0.0
Commuting	2.8	2.1	3.5	2.1	3.5	2.1
Household work	16.8	29.7	19.6	35.0	17.5	28.7
Civic and voluntary activity	2.1	2.8	2.1	2.8	2.8	3.5
Night sleep	56.0	57.4	54.6	56.0	53.9	55.3
Meals and other personal activities	15.4	16.8	14.0	15.4	16.1	18.2
Socializing	13.3	14.0	10.5	11.9	10.5	11.9
Television	16.8	14.0	13.3	11.2	16.1	11.9
Education and reading	6.3	7.7	2.8	3.5	2.8	4.2
Other leisure	9.8	7.7	7.7	6.3	7.7	7.7

Source: Statistics Canada, *Overview of the Time Use of Canadians in 1998*, Catalogue no. 12F0080XIE.

68. Parents buying time

Time-stressed parents often cope by purchasing services from others to buy time for themselves. They pay for domestic services such as cleaning and laundry, they buy restaurant meals and take-out food, and they spend money on daycare and babysitters. Families with children under age 25 who purchased these kinds of services, spent on average $2,114 for childcare, $1,122 for domestic services, $165 for laundry and $1,181 for restaurant and take-out meals each year.

Predictably, the more families earned, the more they spent on these time- and stress-saving products and services. Average expenditures on childcare by upper-income families were three times higher than the amount spent by families with incomes in the bottom third. Similarly, families with the highest incomes spent close to $3,000 on restaurant and take-out meals in comparison to the roughly $900 spent by the lower-income households. Almost one out of five upper-income families paid an average of $1,317 for domestic services, while hardly any lower-income families were able to buy this kind of help.

And so what?

As dual-earner families became the norm, much of the work once done by homemakers has been contracted out, fuelling the growth of service industries. Even so, the real work of making and sustaining a home still rests with family members, especially women. One out of four married women devotes herself full-time to homemaking and/or child rearing. About a third of employed women with children work part-time and many of them did so in order to better balance both of their "jobs".

68. Annual Expenditures on Selected Services, Families with Children Aged 24 and under, by Income Group (1996)

	Bottom Third		Middle Third		Top Third		Total	
	% reporting expenditure	Average exp.	% reporting expenditure	Average exp.	% reporting expenditure	Average exp.	% reporting expenditure	Average exp.
Childcare[1]	29.1%	$1,128	36.7%	$1,869	36.3%	$3,149	34.0%	$2,114
Domestic services[2]	1.1	$287	4.7	$555	18.7	$1,317	8.2	$1,122
Laundry[3]	52.0	$179	70.0	$126	84.9	$189	69.0	$165
Restaurant meals[4]	94.1	$892	98.3	$1,631	99.6	$2,851	97.4	$1,811

[1]Childcare includes expenditures on daycare and other childcare outside/inside the home, including evening and weekend care.
[2]Domestic help excluding childcare.
[3]Laundry and dry-cleaning services.
[4]Restaurant meals includes purchases in restaurants, drive-ins, cafeterias, take-outs, etc.

Source: Statistics Canada's Survey of Family Expenditures, 1996 microdata.

69. Who's minding the kids?

To raise children is to have another full-time job. Seven out of ten mothers of preschoolers, and one in four fathers with children under the age of six, spend 30 or more hours a week on the unpaid job of being a parent. By the time the children are in school, the time required to care for them is less. Even so, six out of ten mothers and three out of ten fathers with children aged 6 to 14 spent 15 hours or more a week taking care of their children.

At century end, approximately 40% of Canada's 2.3 million children under the age of 6 received some form of non-parental childcare while one or both parents worked for pay or studied. These children spent an average of 27 hours per week in a variety of care arrangements. More than half of them spent part of their day in someone else's home, 9% of which were licensed home daycare settings. About one in every five was cared for in their own home by either a relative or non-relative. Another one in five attended a licensed daycare centre. More than one-third of children received childcare from two or more providers and, in some instances, in two or more different locations.

Overall, a third of children under the age of 12 regularly received care from someone other than their parents and schoolteachers. About one in four of the 2.3 million school-aged children between 6 and 11 also spent time in the care of someone other than their parents. More than half of them went to someone else's home when they were not in school. About three in ten went home to be cared for by a relative or babysitter. Another two in ten were enrolled in formal daycare centre programs or before and after school programs.

And so what?

Typically, mothers spend more time than fathers providing childcare. This reflects the differences in the proportion of men and women who are employed, the hours they spend at their jobs and the traditional division of parenting roles. Most parents also know that they are always "on call" for their children.

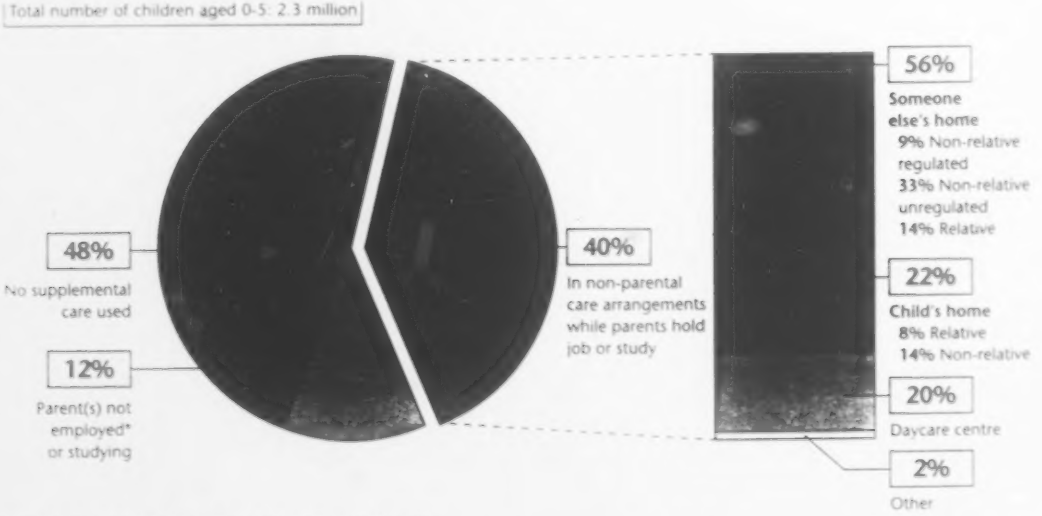
Despite the fact that most mothers and fathers at the end of the century depended on others who could "pinch hit" for them while they were on the job or studying, parents often struggled to find, pay for and organize appropriate child care for their children.

69. Hours Spent on Unpaid Childcare[1] by Mothers and Fathers (1996)

	Less than 5 hours of childcare[2]	5 to 14 hours of childcare	15 to 29 hours of childcare	30 or more hours of childcare	Total population
Mothers with youngest child less than 6	6%	9%	16%	69%	100%
Fathers with youngest child less than 6	20	29	25	26	100
Mothers with youngest child 6-14	17	25	22	37	100
Fathers with youngest child 6-14	38	31	16	15	100
Mothers with youngest child 15 and over	75	14	6	6	100
Fathers with youngest child 15 and over	86	9	3	2	100

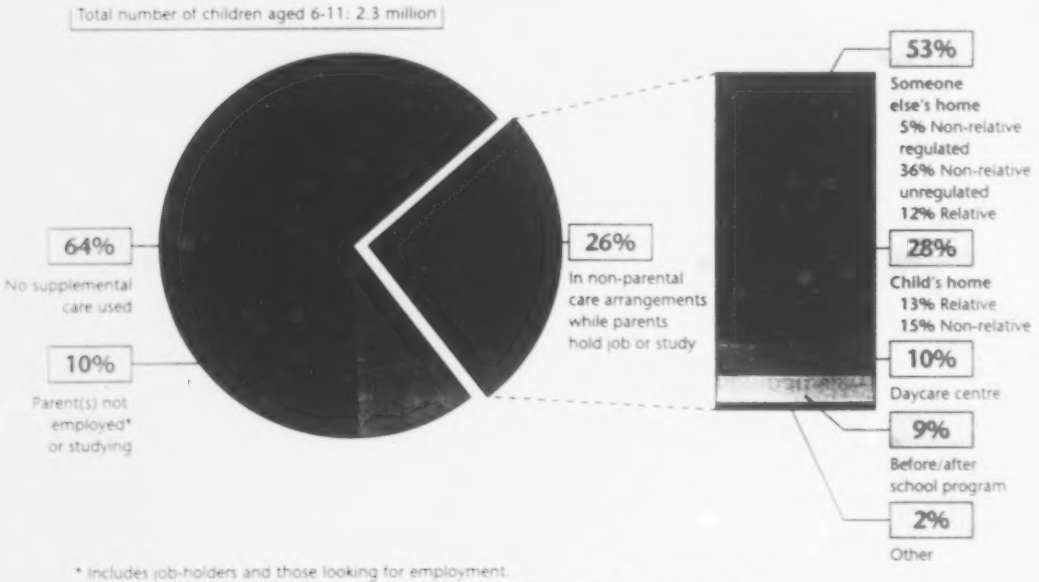
[1]Hours spent doing unpaid childcare in the week prior to Census day in 1996.
[2]Includes those who spent no time on unpaid childcare.
Source : Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series CD-ROM, 93F0020XCB96004.

69a. Percentage of Children Aged 0-5 in Non-parental Childcare While Parent(s) Work or Study (1994/1995)



* Includes job-holders and those looking for employment.
Source: Statistics Canada, National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, microdata file.

69b. Percentage of Children Aged 6-11 in Non-parental Childcare (Outside of School Hours) While Parent(s) Work or Study (1994-1995)



* Includes job-holders and those looking for employment.

Source: Statistics Canada, National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, microdata file.

69c. Percentage of Children Aged 0-11 Using Supplemental Non-parental Childcare so Parents Can Work or Study, by Province (1994-95)

	% using supplemental care arrangement	Of those using supplemental care, % with 2 or more care arrangements
Canada	33%	33%
Newfoundland	27	21
Prince Edward Island	32	28
Nova Scotia	34	32
New Brunswick	32	33
Quebec	34	35
Ontario	34	32
Manitoba	32	37
Saskatchewan	33	29
Alberta	31	31
British Columbia	32	34

Source: Statistics Canada's National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, microdata 1994-95.

(the family) is inescapable and necessary,
but not always comfortable and not always sweet,
and sometimes profoundly exigent, demanding
and tyrannical. But without it we cannot begin
our lives, sustain our lives and we cannot
grow comfortably to the end of our lives.

Vivian Rakoff (1990). Cited in *Today's Family: A Critical Focus*. Phyllis Meiklejohn, Annette Yaeger and Lenore Kurch (eds.). Toronto: Collier MacMillan Canada Inc., 230.

70. Children at play

Children and young people thrive when provided with opportunities to participate in and contribute to the lives of their communities. By joining clubs, playing sports, taking music, dance or art lessons at the local community centre or library, they learn new skills, and socialize with others of their own age. They also meet and work with both the younger and older members of their communities.

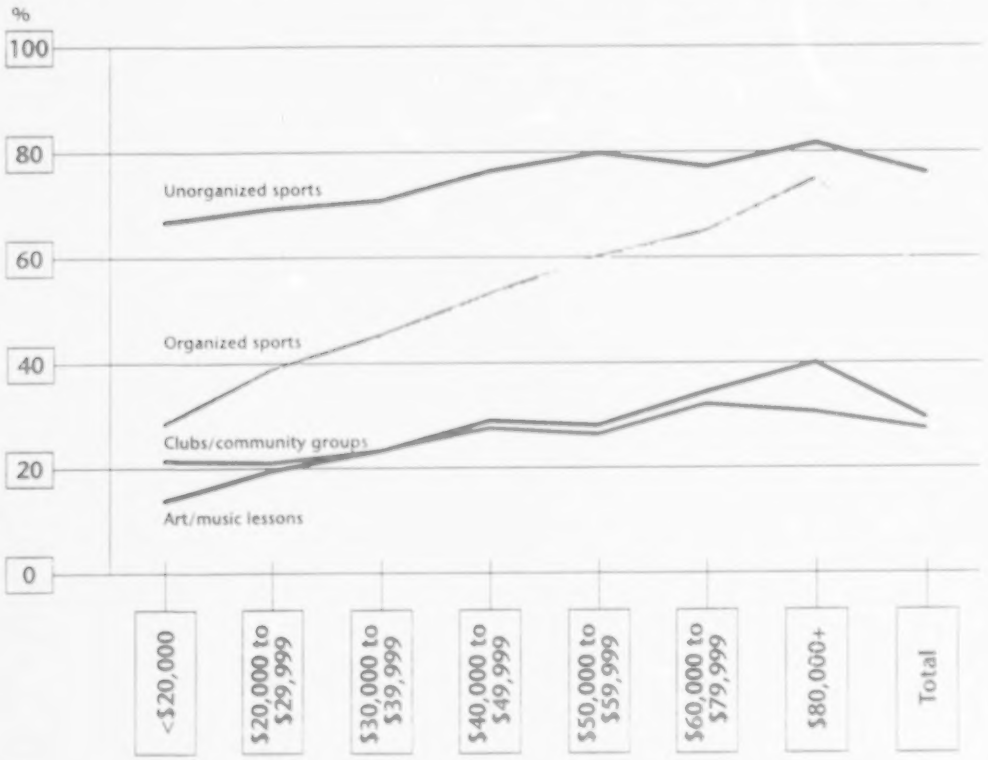
More than half of children aged 4 to 11 in two-parent families participated in organized sports, and three-quarters were involved in sports informally on a weekly basis during 1994-95. About one in four children participated in arts, music or dance lessons every week and another one in four belonged to a club or community group such as a 4H Club, Boys and Girls Club or Scouts.

The extent to which children participated in these kinds of character- and community-building activities depended both on the financial resources of their parents and the level of investment made by their communities. Participation rates were high where there were good parks, playgrounds, arenas, swimming pools and community centres. Children from low-income neighbourhoods were far less likely to have these opportunities. While three-quarters of children from families with the highest incomes participated in organized sports, only one-quarter of those from the poorest families did so. The pattern of participation in other recreational and community activities was similar.

And so what?

Extracurricular activities build strong bodies and skills, but they also build relationships, self-esteem, confidence and character. They protect children from social, emotional and behavioural problems. The commitments that all citizens and taxpayers make to building communities that are friendly to children represents a vital investment in the families of today and tomorrow.

70. Extracurricular Activities and Family Income (Percentage of Children* Participating Once a Week or More) (1994-95)



*Children in two-parent families.
Source: Data from the National Longitudinal Survey on Children and Youth 1994 and 1995.

71. Family time or prime time?

In 1996, Canadians watched approximately three hours of television each day, or almost one entire day out of seven. There were many different patterns of viewing: children tended to watch less than adults, adolescents less than younger children, seniors more than students, women more than men, the less educated more than the highly educated.

Canadians tuned in to the tube for different reasons. For some, it was a barely noticed companion in the corner; for others it was a compulsion. For some, television was a source of information; for others a time-filling entertainment. Some family members had favourite fictional characters who seemed almost like old friends. Many used television to "veg out" at the end of a hard day of work and family obligations.

In less than half a century, television transformed the lives of Canadians and largely shaped how much time family members spend together and what they talk about. After its introduction in the 1950s, families began to plan their lives around the listings in the TV Guide to avoid missing their favourite programs. Later, as channels and programs proliferated to cater to different tastes, the family is more likely to be spread out in different rooms watching different shows, or "surfing the Net" in search of information and entertainment anywhere in the world.

And so what?

Television and, increasingly, the Internet are woven into the daily lives of families. Accordingly, parents are anxious about their children's television habits. Although it often serves as the electronic babysitter and gives parents time off on Saturday morning or when they're trying to make dinner, they worry about what their children are watching on television or encountering on the Internet. Even though most parents try to control TV viewing they may be less inclined to monitor what children are up to with their computers and the Internet, perhaps because they often need their youngsters to show them how computers work.

71. Average Hours per Week of Television Viewing (Fall 1996)

	Total population	Children 2-11	Adolescents 12-17	Men 18 and over	Women 18 and over
Canada	22.8	17.9	17.3	21.9	26.5
Newfoundland	24.0	21.9	18.9	21.8	28.0
Prince Edward Island	21.3	17.1	18.9	20.3	24.4
Nova Scotia	24.5	19.7	18.1	23.5	28.3
New Brunswick	24.2	20.0	17.3	22.6	28.5
Quebec					
Total	26.0	20.1	18.3	24.6	30.7
English	22.5	18.2	18.3	21.6	25.4
French	26.6	20.5	18.3	25.2	31.7
Ontario	21.8	17.6	17.2	21.0	25.0
Manitoba	22.3	16.1	18.0	21.7	26.2
Saskatchewan	22.5	17.4	16.4	21.3	27.3
Alberta	20.3	16.5	16.0	19.5	23.7
British Columbia	21.0	15.5	16.0	21.1	23.7

Source: Statistics Canada's Canada's Culture, Heritage and Identity: A Statistical Perspective, Cat. #87-211-XPB 1997

72. Families and the printed word

Canadians continued to read for information, relaxation and news about the world. About nine out of ten Canadians read newspapers regularly, eight out of ten read magazines and seven out of ten reported reading at least one book in the previous twelve months.[1]

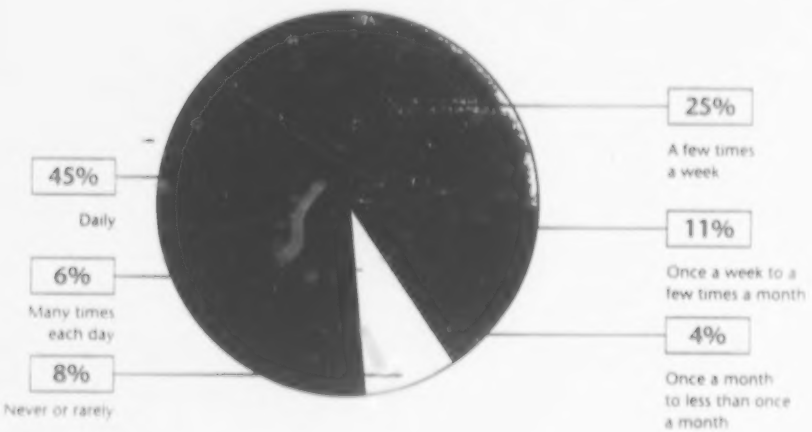
Most parents read to their children or listened as their children read to them. Seven out of ten children under the age of 11 read with a parent daily or at least a few times a week. About one in five Canadians had trouble reading and writing and depended on family members or friends.[2]

And so what?

Literacy is the minimum price of admission to a knowledge-based society and its opportunities. Learning and literacy begin at home. The time parents spend to introduce their children to books, newspapers, magazines and, increasingly, to the Internet, is more important than ever before.

[1] Statistics Canada: *General Social Survey*, 1992, Catalogue no. 87-211-XPB.
[2] Statistics Canada: *Reading the Future: A Portrait of Literacy in Canada*, 1996; *Literacy, Economy and Society: Results of the First International Adult Literacy Survey*, 1995.

72. Distribution of Children Aged 2-11 by Frequency an Adult Reads Aloud to Child or Listens to Child Read Aloud (1994-95)



Distribution of Children Aged 2 to 11 years by Frequency an Adult Reads Aloud to Child or Listens to Child Read Aloud, by province (1994-95)

	Never or Rarely	Once a month to less than once a month	Once a week to a few times a month	A few times a week	Daily	Many times each day
Canada	7.8%	4.4%	11.0%	25.4%	45.2%	6.3%
Nfld.	5.4*	–	5.7	16.2	63.3	7.0
PEI	5.9*	–	9.4*	26.1	51.1	–
NS	6.5*	5.2*	10.9	19.2	52.1	6.1
NB	6.9*	3.6*	9.4*	19.4	55.5	5.3
Que.	11.6	4.4	11.8	29.1	39.8	3.3
Ont.	6.0	4.3	11.3	25.4	45.2	7.8
Man.	7.3*	4.3*	12.1	24.1	45.7	6.5
Sask.	8.0	7.1	14.7	24.0	41.4	4.7
Alb.	7.4	3.9*	10.3	23.4	48.4	6.7
BC	6.8*	4.7*	9.2	24.6	46.8	8.0

–Sample size too small to provide reliable estimates
*Estimates are less reliable due to small sample size

Source: Statistics Canada's National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, microdata, 1994-95

73. Keeping in touch

Regular contact with and support from family members, friends and neighbours continued to be an important source of health and well-being to Canadians at the end of the century, despite their hectic schedules and geographical mobility.

Almost one-quarter of all Canadians over the age of 15 were in touch with one or more of their grandparents at least once a week. Within this national average, Prince Edward Island had the highest rate at 38%, British Columbia and Quebec were lower at 19% and 17%.

Nationally, more than one in three women kept in touch with a daughter or daughter-in-law daily, and almost as many had daily contact with a son or son-in-law. In most families, it was mothers who were in contact with their children most often.

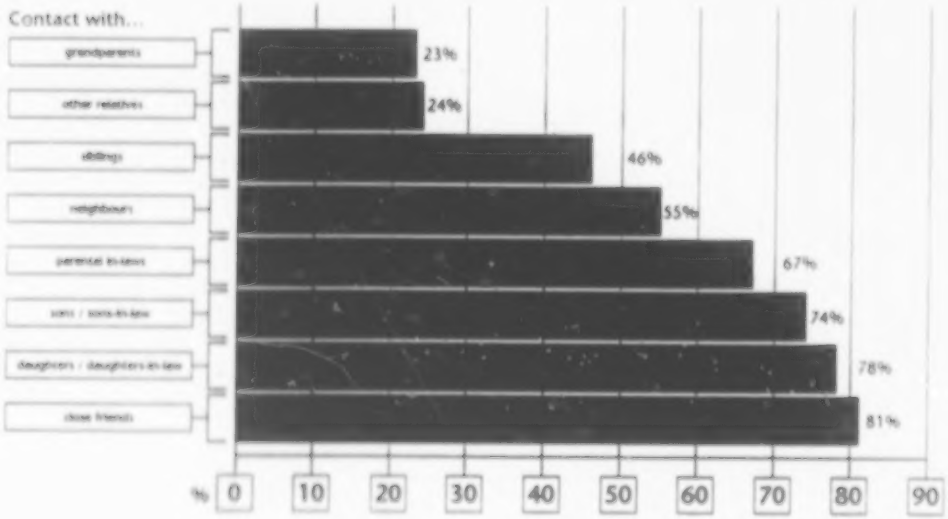
Siblings tended to be more distant from one another: only 12% of Canadians over the age of 15 no longer living at home had daily contact with their brothers and sisters. Even so, close to one half kept in touch at least once a week.

Eight out of ten Canadians touched base with their close friends daily or weekly. Contact with close friends was more characteristic of life in the Atlantic Provinces where interaction with family and friends was more frequent than the national average, perhaps because its communities are smaller and closer knit than elsewhere.

And so what?

Staying in touch can be quite a challenge. Between 1991 and 1996, four of every ten Canadians moved from one home to another. About half of them simply moved from one house—a 'starter' home perhaps—to another residence in the same municipality—a house in the suburbs or a retirement home. However, half of those who moved, roughly a quarter of Canadians, moved to another municipality, province or country during the five years. Even so, Canadians want to stay in touch with friends and family as much as possible. For many who have moved away from home, telephones and—increasingly—e-mails are the "next best thing to being there."

73. Percentage of Population Age 15 and Over Having Weekly Contact with Various Family and Friends (1996/97)



Note: Percentages based on applicable population. For example, the population aged 15 and over with at least one living grandparent.
Source: Statistics Canada, National Population Health Survey microdata, 1996/97.

74. Seniors still working hard

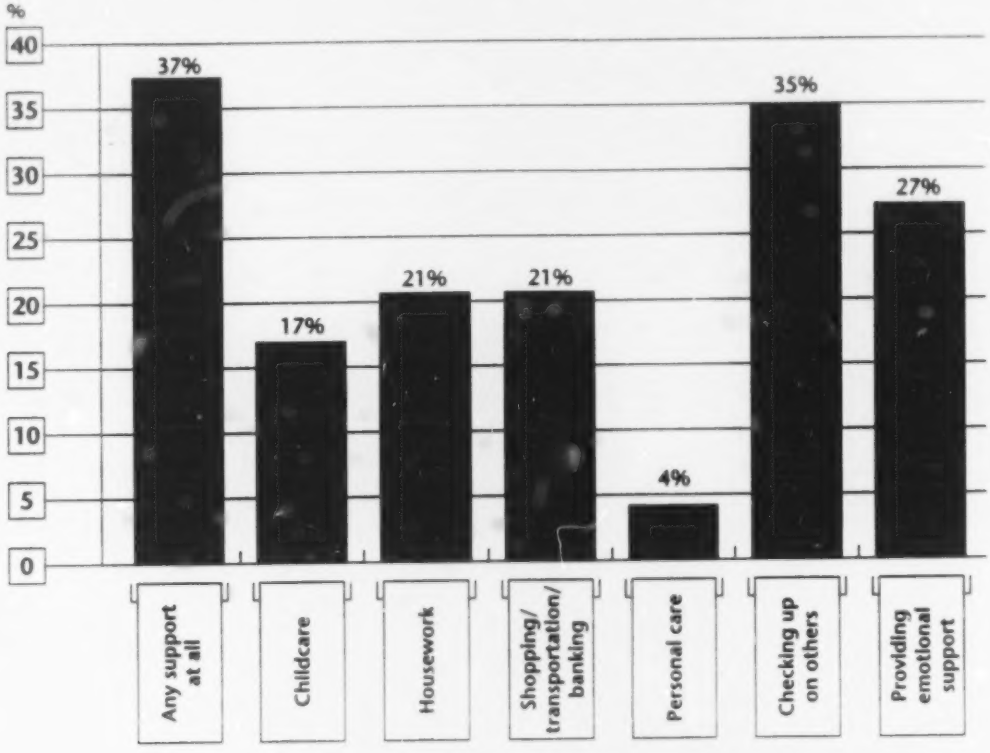
Drawing on lifetimes of experience and hard work, Canada's seniors make essential contributions to the lives of their children and grandchildren, their friends and neighbours and their communities. More than a third of all seniors aged 65+ worked without pay, providing childcare, doing housework or house maintenance for others, assisting with shopping, transportation and banking and just checking up on people who might need their help.

Close to half a million seniors regularly pitched in to provide temporary or ongoing childcare to their grandchildren when their own children needed to go to work, study or simply take a break from the kids. Seven percent of seniors spent at least 5 hours per week helping other seniors, some devoting more than 15 hours a week. Almost one in four seniors volunteered their talents and time as formal volunteers, and fully 60% participated in informal volunteer activities outside their homes. In 1997, eight out of ten seniors made at least one financial contribution to a charity; and their contributions were, on average, larger than those of younger Canadians.

And so what?

Canada's society is aging. The proportion of seniors will continue to grow during the first decades of the 21st century, especially as the baby-boomers begin to retire around 2010. The experience, wisdom, good health, energy and generosity of seniors are fundamental resources upon which the country will continue to depend.

74. Percentage of Seniors Providing Assistance with Personal or Household Chores (1996)



Source: Health Canada, Division of Aging and Seniors, *Canada's Seniors, No. 34*

75. Here's to your health!

At the end of the century, most Canadians felt that they enjoyed good health. One-quarter rated their health as excellent, and close to two-thirds said they were in either excellent or very good health. Only one out of ten described their health as fair or poor.

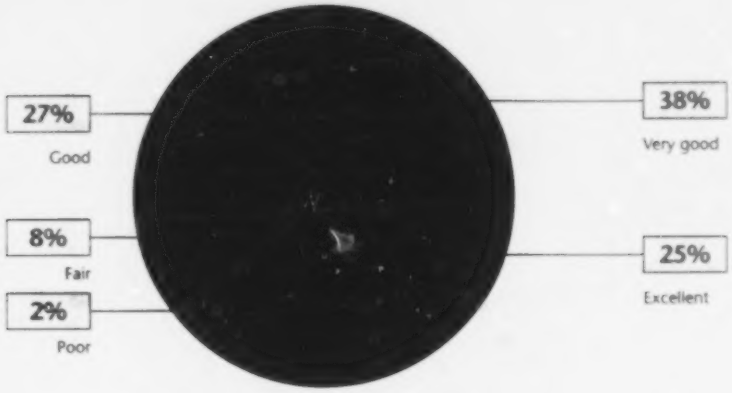
The evidence about how family life affects health was somewhat mixed. Couples with children were more likely to rate their health as excellent than were lone parents or couples without children. Many couples without children were older and beginning feel the passage of time. Couples generally felt less stress than single, separated or divorced people, or parents with children at home. Mothers were marginally more stressed than fathers. (Stress was measured as feeling irritable, having problems concentrating and sleeping, suffering depression or panic attacks.)[1]

And so what?

Families are simultaneously the foundation of health and wellbeing and the source of stress and anxiety. When asked if they are healthy, most Canadians say "yes" even though most will also acknowledge that they are worried about their children, jobs, diets and weight, and they also know they should exercise more, stop smoking and take better care of themselves.

[1]Globe and Mail/Angus Reid (1999) *Family matters: A look at issues concerning families and raising children in Canada today.*

75. Self-Rating of Overall General Health (population aged 15 and older) (1996-97)



Source: Statistics Canada's National Population Health Survey, microdata 1996/97.

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76. Family members look after each other

Family members are in the front line when it comes to caring for the frail elderly or those with special needs.

More than nine out of ten individuals with special needs or disabilities lived with their families—typically in their own, their parents' or their children's home. While many persons with disabilities were capable of caring for themselves and carrying out household activities, when they did require assistance, they most often turned to their families.

In 1996, millions of Canadians provided care to the senior members of their families (over 65 years of age). Many of these seniors were frail or living alone and needed help with housekeeping, shopping, laundry, banking, personal care and similar tasks.

Generally speaking, women were most likely to be offering unpaid help to seniors. Two out of every ten women over the age of 15 (2.2 million women) and 14% of men over the age of 15 (1.5 million of them) were involved in providing care and support for elders.

Older people and seniors themselves were more likely to be called upon to lend a hand. One in four women between the ages of 35 and 54 provided care and companionship to at least one senior, and almost half of the women providing such care did so for more than 5 hours a week. Younger people and men were much less likely to provide unpaid care to seniors.

Canadians at the end of the century generally stayed healthier longer than previous generations but the rate of disability increased dramatically with age. Fewer than six out of ten seniors aged 75-84 were disabled, but more than eight of ten Canadians over the age of 85 had some form of disability.

Fewer than one child in ten under the age of 15 lived with a disability. Almost all of them lived at home in the care of their parents and other family members. In extreme cases, parents of children with severe disabilities provided full-time nursing care.

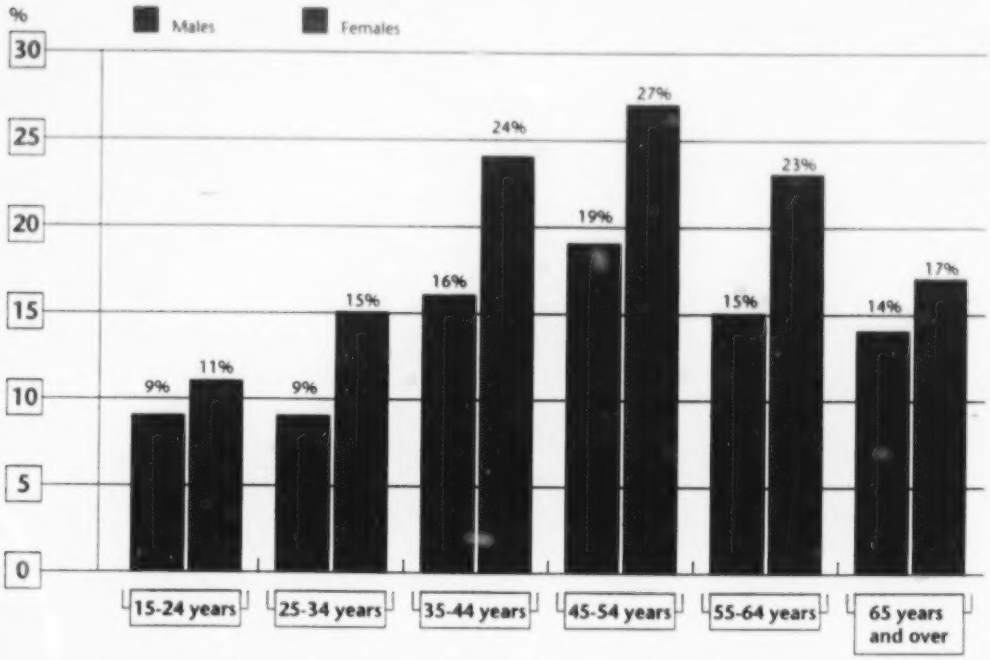
While families continued to provide the bulk of care to the sick and disabled members of their families, an increasing number of such families received support through formal home-care services. These publicly subsidized services were intended to help people live in their own homes rather than in hospitals or institutions. About two-thirds of the half- a-million Canadians who received formal home-care were seniors.

And so what?

Caring for people at home—either their own home or at the home of a relative—is not new. Early in the 20th century, it was taken for granted that families would provide (or, less frequently, purchase) the care and services required by their aging or ailing relatives. However, by the middle of the century, institutionalization of the aged or disabled was commonplace in a society when family members did not live close to one another and when most families counted on both men and women to "bring home the bacon."

By the end of the century, people have become more interested in home care, thanks to increased life expectancy and the growing numbers of older seniors as well as the high costs of institutional care. Home care has increased the call upon the time, energy and resources of families, friends and communities. Women—wives, daughters, daughters-in-law and granddaughters—provide most of the informal care to their relatives. They often do so at considerable cost to their jobs and careers, their own physical and emotional health, and their other family relationships and responsibilities.

76. Percentage of Population Providing Unpaid Assistance* to Seniors, by Age (1996)



*Hours spent providing unpaid assistance to seniors for the week prior to Census day in 1996. Unpaid assistance includes such things as providing personal care, visiting, helping with shopping, baking or taking medicine.

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series CD-ROM, 93F0020XCB96004.

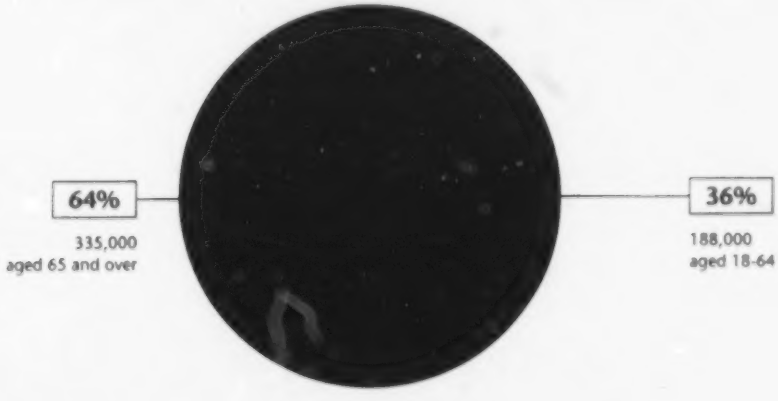
76a. Population Providing Unpaid Assistance to Seniors, Showing number of hours spent, Men and Women Aged 15 and over by Age Group (1996)

		Of those providing assistance, number of hours[1]		
	Number providing assistance	Less than 5 hours	5 to 9 hours	10 or more hours
Males	1,499,025	70%	17%	12%
15-24	174,170	81	12	7
25-34	207,010	72	17	11
35-44	391,540	72	17	11
45-54	347,340	71	18	11
55-64	186,650	66	20	14
65 and over	192,300	57	21	21
Females	2,224,425	62	21	16
15-24	215,755	78	13	9
25-34	329,795	68	19	13
35-44	589,315	65	21	14
45-54	495,910	60	23	17
55-64	283,700	53	25	22
65 and over	309,925	53	24	23

[1]Hours spent providing unpaid assistance to seniors for the week prior to Census day in 1996. Unpaid assistance includes such things as providing personal care, visiting, helping with shopping, baking or taking medicine.

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, The Nation Series CD-ROM, 93F0020XCB96004.

76b. 523,000 Canadians Aged 18 and Over Received Home Care in 1995[1]



[1]12-month period spanning 1994/95.
Source: Data from Statistics Canada's National Population Health Survey 1994/95, reported in Statistics Canada, *The Daily*, July 24, 1998.

The real experts on the aged are children. Only children understand what elders are for, and only they can meet the real need of the aged: the need to be needed. Children need grandparents and grandparents need grandchildren, whether they are their own flesh and blood kin or surrogate grandchildren. And until these mutual aids are acknowledged and supported, the aged will never achieve more than begrudging respect, much less outright affection, as elders in American society.

Arthur Kornhaber and Kenneth L. Woodward (1985). *Grandparents/Grandchildren: The Vital Connection*, 2nd edition (New Brunswick (U.S.A.): Transaction Publishers, 163.

77. Some families just can't cope

Although the vast majority of children are well cared for by their parents, some are taken away from their homes to protect them from possible neglect or violence. For example, on any day in 1997, more than ten thousand children were living under the protection of the Ontario government in foster homes or institutions. Still others run away from home and end up facing the dangers of living homeless and on the street.

The last years of the century saw several widely reported and exceptionally tragic cases of parental abuse, neglect and deaths of children. Consequently, many provinces made changes in policy that led to increased numbers of child protection orders. Between 1993 and 1997, British Columbia and Alberta reported the largest increases in the numbers of children under their protection.[1]

And so what?

There is no exact science that can guide the difficult decisions of child protection authorities and child welfare workers. They must deal with questions of resources and of conscience daily as they assess how to protect the best interests of children. Experts on child abuse and protection suggest that there is a need for more prevention, more support to parents, better training for child care workers and more coordination among the child welfare authorities, police and courts.

[1]Federal Provincial Working Group on Child and Family Services Information, Child and Family Services Annual Report, 1992-1993, 1994-95, 1996-97, April 1996 and April 1997.

77. Number of Children in Care of Provincial and Territorial Child Welfare Authorities as of March 31, 1997

	NF	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT
Number of children in care (1996-1997)	720	200	1,770	1,080	n/a	10,380	5,200	2,420	5,540	8,230	190	350

Note: Interprovincial comparisons must be interpreted with caution because of the different ways provinces define children in care and the different methods of data collection.

Source: Social Policy, Strategic Policy Branch, Human Resources Development Canada.

78. When love turns to hate

In 1997, 22,000 acts of spousal violence were reported to Canadian police agencies.[1] Police estimated that this number represented only half of the actual incidents because acts of family violence often go unreported. Nearly nine out of ten victims of spousal violence were women. Over a period of twenty years, three times as many wives as husbands were killed by their spouses: 1,485 wives compared to 442 husbands. Most at risk of being murdered by a spouse are young women under the age of 25.

Between 1993 and 1997, the reports of female victims of spousal assaults decreased by about 8%, but the reports of males assaulted by their wives increased by 18%.

Close to one in four victims of violence was a child under the age of 18. In about one-quarter of the reported incidents, it was a family member who had committed the offence.[1] Parents—mostly fathers—were the accused in 65% of the cases involving assaults against children and in 44% of sexual assaults against children and young people. The number of children under age 18 killed by their parents increased between 1988 and 1997. More than half of these young victims were below the age of three; infants under one year of age were at the greatest risk of being murdered, in 45% of cases by their mother and in 40% by their father.

About 2% of all victims of the violent crimes reported were 65 years of age or older and almost one in four of them had been physically assaulted by a family member.

And so what?

Family, it is said, is a "haven in a heartless world." However, violence among family members can turn the ideals of family upside down and violate the security, integrity and dignity of loved ones. There is no type of family that is exempt from the threat of violence. Mothers and fathers abuse and neglect children. Married and common-law spouses beat and even kill their wives and husbands. Brothers and sisters victimize one another. Gay and lesbian partners fight and hurt each other. Adolescents terrorize their parents. Even the elderly are victims of their children.

[1] Statistics Canada, *The Daily*, June 11, 1999 – "Family Violence: A Statistical Profile."

78. Family Violence in Canada: Some Selected Facts[1]

Since the age of sixteen, **51%** of Canadian women report having experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence.

Nearly three in ten Canadian women **(29%)** who have ever been married or lived in a common-law relationship have been physically or sexually assaulted by their marital partner at some point during the relationship; **21%** of these women were assaulted during pregnancy.

Children witnessed violence against their mothers in almost **40%** of violent marriages. In many cases of children witnessing violence, the violence was so severe that the women feared for their lives **(52%)** and/or were injured **(61%)**.

Nearly one quarter of women **(22%)** who have experienced wife assault never reported the abuse at the time.

Violent men are three times as likely as non-violent men to have witnessed spousal violence in childhood, and women who were raised in similar circumstances are twice as likely to be victims of spousal violence.

A total of **90,792** women and children were admitted to **413** shelters for battered women across Canada in 1997-98.

Of sexual assaults by family members reported to police, girls were victimized in **79%** of cases **(1,662)**, while boys were victims in **21%** of cases **(440)**.

The risk of sexual abuse for persons with disabilities is "at least **150%** greater than that for individuals of the same sex and similar age without disabilities."

[1]The National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, Health Canada (1999). "Sharing Information and Solutions," Issue 2, September, p. 7.

79. Most Canadians still want to be a family

At century end, Canadians tended to have fewer children than their grandparents did, and they waited longer before having their first child. Nevertheless, the vast majority still wanted to have at least one child, and most wanted more than one. Ninety-six percent of women between the ages of 20 and 29 said they wanted a child. Most of them wanted either two (46%) or more (32%); only 6% wanted one. Men of the same ages concurred. These intentions were strongly held: only 12% of women and 14% of men said they did not know.

People who grew up with brothers and sisters tended to want more than one child. Interestingly, men and women with higher education had different views about how many children they expected to have. While there was little difference in the intentions of women in their twenties, women in their thirties with a university degree intended to have fewer children than women with less education. In contrast, highly educated men intended to father more children than other men. Young men and women with strong religious commitments generally intended to have larger families than those who did not identify with a religion or those who did not attend religious services regularly.

And so what?

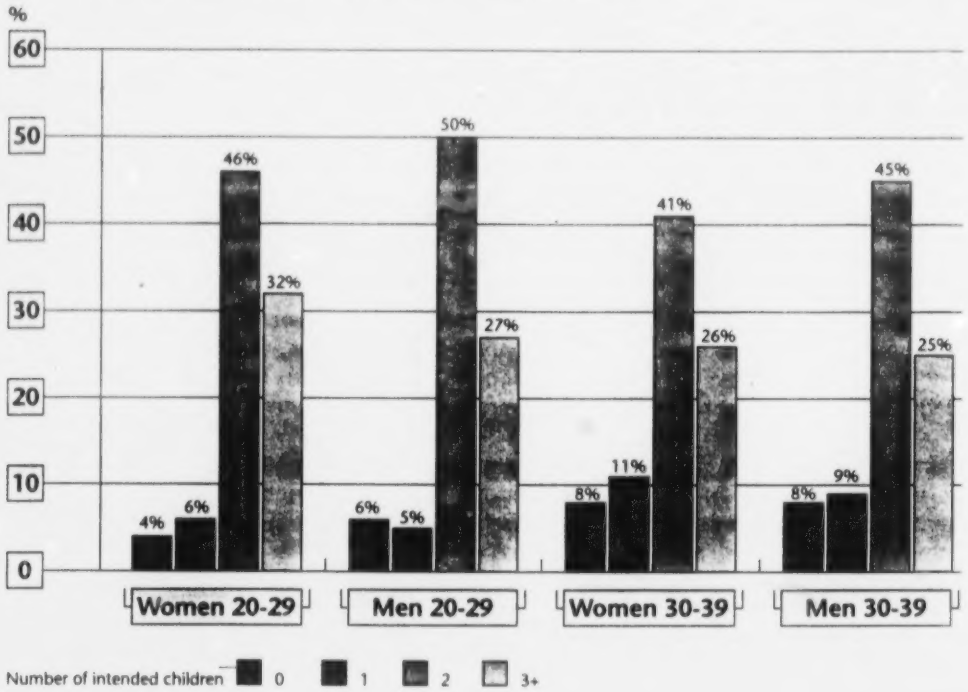
At the end of the century, Canadians were asked their views on marriage and family.[1] Most Canadians report that they are happy in their relationships and that their families are more important to them than anything else. Most parents are crazy about their kids and report that they would do it all again, even though they have discovered that being a parent is the most demanding and important job they will ever do.

Whether or not men and women in their twenties at the end of the century who intend to have two or three or even more children actually do so remains to be seen. Generally, as men and women get older and stay in school longer, settle into a job and have their first or second child, they choose to have fewer children than they might once have expected.

At the beginning of the new century, demographers predict that most young Canadians will marry. Most who choose not to marry are likely to live with a common-law partner. Some may choose to live with a partner of the same sex. Many marriages and common-law relationships will end in divorce or separation. The job of raising children will continue to require significant investments of money, time and energy. In spite of all this, most young adults aspire to a future in a loving partnership that includes a long-term commitment to raise and nurture children.

[1]Angus Reid survey, *The Globe and Mail*, 15th September, 1999.

79. Number of Children that Women and Men Intend to Have[1], by Age Group (1995)



[1]As measured by the question "What is the total number of children you intend to have, including those you have now and are currently expecting?" The proportion of people responding "don't know" ranged from 12% among women aged 20-29 and men aged 30-39, to 14% among women aged 30-39.

Source: Dave Dupuis, "What influences people's plans to have children?" *Canadian Social Trends*, Statistics Canada, Cat. 11-008-XPE, Spring 1998.

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80. It takes a nation to support its families

Statistics about Canada's families capture some of the facts about what it is to be Canadian at the beginning of the 21st Century. From this information we can understand much about the traditions from which Canadian families draw, what they look like, what they do, how they make ends meet, how their members care for one another, and to some degree, how they feel.

As a new millennium opens, it is clear that the tapestry of Canadian families will continue to grow richer and more varied. There will be different kinds of families: married and common-law couples, lone-parent and two-parent families, single-earner and dual-earner households, blended or recombined families involving various configurations of step-relationships, same-sex couples with and without children, as well as adoptive and foster families. And Canada will continue to be enriched by the many ethnic, linguistic and religious traditions that immigrants bring with them.

Canadian families face new challenges in the coming century. All families share time together, yet time is the scarcest resource for many family members at the turn of the century. Mothers and fathers struggle to balance the competing demands of their paid jobs and their families. Young families are hard-pressed to invest time in their schools, communities and the civic institutions upon which they depend. Adult sons and daughters try to care for their parents while providing for themselves and their children. Economic pressures demand that families spend more and more time earning the money they need to fulfil their personal needs and commitments. These and other pressures at the millennium have led Canadians to form families that include fewer children than was the case two or more generations before. Canada is therefore an aging society, and one that will need to invest carefully and well in these fewer, and even more precious children.

Canadians will undoubtedly continue to care for each other, and prepare their children for whatever else the 21st century will bring. As always, young couples will fall in love. Most will have children of their own. As always, parents will raise their children as best they can to assume new roles in a rapidly changing world. These children, and in time their children, will probably tell future pollsters the very same thing as Canadians do today: that their families are more important than anything else.

Individually, we are in agreement. However, Canada as a nation must decide how best to acknowledge, support and reinforce the commitments that individuals are willing to make to one another as they create and sustain their families. We rely on families to help children learn to learn, to become socially responsible adults, to govern themselves, to make commitments, to fulfill obligations to one another, and to contribute to the communities in which we all live. For these values to be mirrored at every level of our

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society, we must go on contributing to our own families. But there is more: we must also speak and act collectively so that we, through our governments, in our workplaces and in our communities, invest appropriately in all Canadian families, starting with those most in need.

As we enter into a new century, one thing is for certain. There is a future for the family. Canadians will continue to commit themselves to others in search of love, security and the connections that tie them to their past and commit them to the future.

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